






THE LIBRARY
OF
THE UNIVERSITY
OF CALIFORNIA
LOS ANGELES

GIFT

From the Library of
Henry Goldman, Ph.D.
1886-1972



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

The Muses' Library



POEMS OF JOHN GAY

VOL. II.

THE
POETICAL WORKS OF
JOHN GAY

EDITED WITH A LIFE
AND NOTES BY
JOHN UNDERHILL

VOL. II.

TRANSLATIONS
PROLOGUES AND EPILOGUES
FABLES, POEMS FROM 'GAY'S CHAIR'
MISCELLANEOUS PIECES, SONGS
AND BALLADS



LONDON:

NEW YORK:

LAWRENCE AND BULLEN CHAS. SCRIBNER'S SONS

16 HENRIETTA ST., W.C.

743 & 745 BROADWAY

1893

1893

Printed by T. and A. Constable, Printers to Her Majesty,
at the Edinburgh University Press,

Stack
Annex

PR
3473

A1
1893
v. 2

CONTENTS

OF THE SECOND VOLUME

	PAGE
TRANSLATIONS—	
The Story of Arachne	3
The Story of Acheloüs and Hercules	11
The Death of Nessus the Centaur	15
The Death of Hercules	17
The Transformation of Lychas into a Rock	20
The Apotheosis of Hercules	22
The Transformation of Galanthis	23
The Story of Iolaüs restored to Youth	26
The Prophecy of Themis	26
The Debate of the Gods	27
PROLOGUES AND EPILOGUES—	
Prologue to 'The Mohocks'	31
Epilogue to 'The Mohocks'	32
Prologue to 'The Wife of Bath'	33
Epilogue to 'The Wife of Bath'	34
'The What d' ye Call it': Prologue and Epilogue	36
Prologue to 'Three Hours after Marriage'	37
Epilogue to 'Three Hours after Marriage'	38
Prologue designed for 'Dione'	40

	PAGE
PROLOGUES AND EPILOGUES. <i>Continued—</i>	
Prologue to 'The Captives'	42
Epilogue to 'The Captives'	43
Prologue to 'Achilles'	44
THE FABLES—	
Volume the First	47
Volume the Second	137
POEMS FROM 'GAY'S CHAIR' —	
The Ladies' Petition	213
To Miss Jane Scott	221
Prediction	222
Comparisons	223
Absence	224
Fable	224
Congratulation to a Newly-Married Pair	225
A Devonshire Hill	226
Letter to a Young Lady	227
To my Chair	230
MISCELLANEOUS PIECES IN VERSE—	
Panthea : an Elegy	235
Araminta : an Elegy	239
A Contemplation on Night	244
A Thought on Eternity	246
An Elegy on a Lap Dog	248
A Receipt for Stewing Veal	249
Ay and No : a Fable	251
The Quidnuncki's : a Tale	252
Verses on Sir Richard Blackmore	255
Epitaph of Bye Words	257
My Own Epitaph	257

CONTENTS

vii

	PAGE
SONGS AND BALLADS	
Sweet William's Farewell to Black-eyed Susan	261
A Lady's Lamentation	263
Damon and Cupid	265
Daphnis and Chloe	266
The Coquet Mother and her Daughter	269
Newgate's Garland	271
Molly Mog ; or, The Fair Maid of the Inn	274
A New Song of New Similes	277
A Ballad on Ale	280
Songs from 'The Mohocks'	284
,, 'The Wife of Bath'	286
,, 'The What d'ye Call it'	289
,, 'The Beggar's Opera'	291
,, 'Polly'	317
,, 'Achilles'	347
 NOTES AND APPENDIX—	
Notes	371
Tales	379

TRANSLATIONS

VOL. II,

A

GAY's published translations are confined to portions of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. His version of the first fable of the Sixth Book—*Arachne in Araneam mutata*—originally appeared in a Miscellany, published by Lintot in 1712, which, by the way, also contained the first sketch of Pope's *Rape of the Lock*. His translations from the Ninth Book were made for the English edition of the *Metamorphoses*, brought out by Sir Samuel Garth in 1717. ('Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, in Fifteen Books, Translated by the most eminent hands. Adorn'd with Sculptures. London: Printed for Jacob Tonson at Shakespeare's Head over-against Katherine Street in the Strand. MDCCLXVII.') This 'noble folio' also contained versions by Dryden (Book I.), Addison (Books II. and III.), Maynwaring, Croxall, Rowe, Tate, and Garth himself. Pope contributed a metrical version of one of the fables of the Ninth Book—*Dryope in Loton transformatur*—which will be found in the original edition between Gay's 'Transformation of Galanthis,' and his 'Story of Iolaüs.' The translations here given were not included by Gay in any collected edition of his works; but they find a place in Bell's four-volume edition (1773), though their source is not in any way indicated.

THE STORY OF ARACHNE

FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE SIXTH BOOK OF
OVID'S 'METAMORPHOSES'

PALLAS attentive heard the Muse's song,
Pleased that so well they had revenged their wrong,
Reflecting thus,—A vulgar soul can praise,
My fame let glorious emulation raise :
Swift vengeance shall pursue th' audacious pride 5
That dares my sacred Deity deride.
Revenge the Goddess in her breast revolves,
And straight the bold Arachne's fate resolves.
Her haughty mind to Heav'n disdain'd to bend,
And durst with Pallas in her art contend. 10
No famous town she boasts, or noble name ;
But to her skilful hand owes all her fame ;
Idmon her father on his trade relied,
And thirsty wool in purple juices dyed ;
Her mother, whom the shades of death confine, 15
Was, like her husband, born of vulgar line.
At small Hypæpæ though she did reside,
Yet industry proclaim'd what birth denied :
All Lydia to her name due honour pays,
And ev'ry city speaks Arachne's praise. 20
Nymphs of Timolus quit their shady woods,
Nymphs of Pactolus leave their golden floods,

And oft with pleasure round her gazing stand,
 Admire her work, and praise her artful hand :
 They view'd each motion, with new wonder seized ; 25
 More than the work her graceful manner pleased.
 Whether raw wool in its first orbs she wound,
 Or with swift fingers twirl'd the spindle round,
 Whether she pick'd with care the knotty piece,
 Or comb'd like streaky clouds the stretching fleece, 30
 Whether her needle play'd the pencil's part,
 'Twas plain from Pallas she derived her art.
 But she, unable to sustain her pride,
 The very mistress of her art defied.
 Pallas obscures her bright celestial grace, 35
 And takes an old decrepit beldame's face.
 Her head is scatter'd o'er with silver hairs
 Which seem to bend beneath a load of years.
 Her trembling hand, emboss'd with livid veins,
 On trusty staff her feeble limbs sustains. 40

She thus accosts the nymph : ' Be timely wise, }
 Do not the wholesome words of age despise, }
 For in the hoary head experience lies : }
 On Earth contend the greatest name to gain,
 To Pallas yield : with Heav'n you strive in vain.' 45

Contempt contracts her brow, her passions rise,
 Wrath and disdain inflame her rolling eyes :
 At once the tangling thread away she throws,
 And scarce can curb her threatening hands from blows,
 ' Worn out with age, and by disease declined, 50
 (She cries), thy carcass has survived thy mind ;

These lectures might thy servile daughters move,
And wary doctrines for thy nieces prove,
My counsel's from myself, my will commands,
And my first resolution always stands : 55
Let her contend ; or does her fear impart
That conquest waits on my superior art ?'

The goddess straight throws off her old disguise,
And heav'nly beauty sparkles in her eyes,
A youthful bloom fills up each wrinkled trace, 60
And Pallas smiles with ev'ry wonted grace.
The nymphs surprised, the deity adore,
And Lydian dames confess her matchless power .
The rival maid alone unmoved remains,
Yet a swift blush her guilty feature stains ; 65
In her unwilling cheek the crimson glows,
And her check'd pride a short confusion knows.
So when Aurora first unveils her eyes,
A purple dawn invests the blushing skies ;
But soon bright Phœbus gains th' horizon's height, 70
And gilds the hemisphere with spreading light.

Desire of conquest sways the giddy maid,
To certain ruin by vain hopes betray'd ;
The goddess with her stubborn will complied,
And deign'd by trial to convince her pride. 75
Both take their stations, and the piece prepare,
And order ev'ry slender thread with care ;
The web inwraps the beam ; the reed divides,
While through the wid'ning space the shuttle
glides,

Which their swift hands receive ; then poised with
 lead, 80
 The swinging weight strikes close th' inserted thread.
 They gird their flowing garments round the waist,
 And ply their feet and arms with dext'rous haste.
 Here each inweaves the richest Tyrian dye,
 There fainter shades in soften'd order lie ; 85
 Such various mixtures in the texture shine,
 Set off the work, and brighten each design :
 As when the sun his piercing rays extends,
 When from thin clouds some drizzling shower de-
 scends,
 We see the spacious humid arch appear, 90
 Whose transient colours paint the splendid air :
 By such degrees the deep'ning shadows rise
 As pleasingly deceive our dazzled eyes ;
 And though the same th' adjoining colour seems,
 Yet hues of diff'rent natures dye th' extremes. 95
 Here height'ning gold they 'midst the woof dis-
 pose,
 And in the web this antique story rose.

Pallas the lofty mount of Mars designs,
 Celestial judgment guides th' unerring lines ;
 Here, in just view, the Athenian structures stand, 100
 And there, the gods contend to name the land ;
 Twelve deities she frames with stately mien,
 And in the midst superior Jove is seen ;
 A glowing warmth the blended colours give,
 The figures in the picture seem to live. 105
 Heav'n's thund'ring monarch sits with awful grace,
 And dread omnipotence imprints his face :

There Neptune stood, disdainfully he frown'd,
 And with his trident smote the trembling ground,
 The parting rocks a spacious chasm disclose, 110
 From whence a fiery, prancing steed arose ;
 And on that useful gift he founds his claim,
 To grace the city with his honour'd name.
 See her own figure next with martial air,
 A shining helmet decks her flowing hair ; 115
 Her thoughtful breast her well-poised shield defends,
 And her bare arm a glitt'ring spear extends,
 With which she wounds the plain ; from thence arose
 A spreading tree : green olives load the boughs.
 The powers her gift behold with wond'ring eyes, 120
 And to the goddess give the rightful prize.

Such mercy checks her wrath that to dissuade
 By others' fate the too presumptuous maid,
 With miniature she fills each corner space,
 To curb her pride and save her from disgrace. 125

Hæmus and Rhodope in this she wrought,
 The beauteous colours spoke her lively thought ;
 With arrogance and fierce ambition fired,
 They to the sacred names of gods aspired ;
 To mountains changed their lofty heads arise, 130
 And lose their less'ning summits in the skies.

In that in all the strength of art was seen
 The wretched fate of the Pygmæan queen ;
 Juno, enraged, resents th' audacious aim,
 And to a crane transforms the vanquish'd dame ; 135
 In that voracious shape she still appears,
 And plagues her people with perpetual wars.

In this, Antigone for beauty strove
 With the bright consort of imperial Jove :
 Juno, incensed, her royal power display'd, 140
 And to a bird converts the haughty maid,
 Laomedon his daughter's fate bewails,
 Nor his, nor Ilion's fervent prayer prevails,
 But on her lovely skin white feathers rise ;
 Changed to a clam'rous stork, she mounts the
 skies. 145

In the remaining orb, the heav'nly maid
 The tale of childless Cinyras display'd,
 A settled anguish in his look appears,
 And from his bloodshot eyes flow streams of tears ;
 On the cold ground, no more a father, thrown ; 150
 He for his daughters clasp'd the polish'd stone.
 And when he sought to hold their wonted charms,
 The temple's steps deceived his eager arms.
 Wreaths of green olive round the border twine,
 And her own tree encloses the design. 155

Arachne paints th' amours of mighty Jove,
 How in a bull, the God disguised his love,
 A real bull seems in the piece to roar,
 And real billows breaking on the shore :
 In fair Europa's face appears surprise, 160
 To the retreating land she turns her eyes,
 And seems to call her maids, who wond'ring stood,
 And with their tears increased the briny flood ;
 Her trembling feet she by contraction saves
 From the rude insult of the rising waves. 165

Here am'rous Jove dissolving Leda trod,
 And in the vig'rous swan conceal'd the God.
 Love lends him now an eagle's new disguise,
 Beneath his fluttering wings Asteria lies,
 Th' enliv'ning colours here with force express'd 170
 How Jove the fair Antiope caress'd.
 In a strong satyr's muscled form he came
 Instilling love transports the glowing dame,
 And lusty twins reward his nervous flame. }
 Here how he soothed the bright Alcmena's love, 175
 Who for Amphitryon took th' impostor Jove,
 And how the God, in golden shower allured
 The guarded nymph in brazen walls immured
 How, in a swain, Mnemosyne he charms ;
 How lambent flame the fair Ægina warms : 180
 And how with various glitt'ring hues inlaid
 In serpent's form Deöis he betray'd.
 Here you, great Neptune, with a short-lived flame,
 In a young bull enjoy th' Æolian dame.
 Then in Enipeus' shape intrigues pursue. 185
 'Tis thus the Aloids boast descent from you,
 Here to Bisaltis was thy love convey'd,
 When a rough ram deceived the yielding maid.

Ceres, kind mother of the bounteous year,
 Whose golden locks a sheafy garland bear ; 190
 And the dread dame with hissing serpents hung
 (From whom the Pegasæan courser sprung)
 Thee in a snuffling stallion's form enjoy,
 Exhaust thy strength and ev'ry nerve employ ;
 Melanthe as a dolphin you betray, 195
 And sport in pleasures on the rolling sea ;

Such just proportion graces ev'ry part,
 Nature herself appears improved by art.
 Here in disguise was mighty Phœbus seen,
 With clownish aspect and a rustic mien ; 200
 Again transform'd he 's dress'd in falcon's plumes,
 And now the lion's noble shape assumes ;
 Now, in a shepherd's form, with treach'rous smiles,
 He Macareian Isse's heart beguiles.
 Here his plump shape enamour'd Bacchus leaves, 205
 And in the grape Erigone deceives.
 There Saturn, in a neighing horse, she wove,
 And Chiron's double form rewards his love.
 Festoons of flowers inwove with ivy shine,
 Border the wond'rous piece, and round the texture
 twine. 210

Not Pallas, nor ev'n spleen itself could blame,
 The wond'rous work of the Mæonian dame ;
 With grief her vast success the goddess bore,
 And of celestial crimes the story tore.
 Her boxen shuttle, now enraged, she took, 215
 And thrice the proud Idmonian artist struck :
 Th' unhappy maid, to see her labours vain,
 Grew resolute with pride, and shame, and pain :
 Around her neck a fatal noose she tied,
 And fought by sudden death her guilt to hide. 220
 Pallas with pity saw the desp'rate deed,
 And thus the virgin's milder fate decreed :
 ' Live, impious rival, mindful of thy crime,
 Suspended thus to waste thy future time,
 Thy punishment involves thy num'rous race, 225
 Who for thy fault shall share in thy disgrace.'

Her incantation magic juices aid,
 With sprinkling drops she bathed the pendent maid, }
 And thus the charm its noxious power display'd. }
 Like leaves in autumn drop her falling hairs, 230
 With these her nose and next her rising ears.
 Her head to the minutest substance shrunk,
 The potent juice contracts her changing trunk ;
 Close to her sides her slender fingers clung,
 There changed to nimble feet in order hung ; 235
 Her bloated belly swells to larger size,
 Which now with smallest threads her work supplies ;
 The virgin in the spider still remains ;
 And in that shape her former art retains.

OVID'S 'METAMORPHOSES'

THE NINTH BOOK

THE STORY OF ACHELOÛS AND HERCULES

THESEUS requests the God to tell his woes,
 Whence his maim'd brow, and whence his groans
 arose ?

When thus the Calydonian stream replied,
 With twining reeds his careless tresses tied :
 ' Ungrateful is the tale ; for who can bear, 5
 When conquer'd, to rehearse the shameful war ?

Yet I'll the melancholy story trace ;
 So great a conqu'ror softens the disgrace :
 Nor was it still so mean the prize to yield,
 As great and glorious to dispute the field. 10

' Perhaps you've heard of Deïanira's name,
 For all the country spoke her beauty's fame.
 Long was the nymph by num'rous suitors woo'd,
 Each with address his envied hopes pursued :
 I join'd the loving band ; to gain the fair, 15
 Reveal'd my passion to her father's ear.
 Their vain pretensions all the rest resign,
 Alcides only strove to equal mine ;
 He boasts his birth from Jove, recounts his spoils,
 His step-dame's hate subdued, and finish'd toils. 20

' Can mortals, then (said I), with gods compare ?
 Behold a god ; mine is the wat'ry care :
 Through your wide realms I take my mazy way,
 Branch into streams, and o'er the region stray :
 No foreign guest your daughter's charms adores, 25
 But one who rises in your native shores.
 Let not his punishment your pity move ;
 Is Juno's hate an argument for love ?
 Though you your life from fair Alcmena drew,
 Jove's a feign'd father, or by fraud a true. 30
 Choose then : confess thy mother's honour lost,
 Or thy descent from Jove no longer boast.

' While thus I spoke, he look'd with stern disdain,
 Nor could the sallies of his wrath restrain,

Which thus broke forth. This arm decides our
right : 35

Vanquish in words : be mine the prize in fight !

‘ Bold he rush’d on. My honour to maintain
I fling my verdant garments on the plain,
My arms stretch forth, my pliant limbs prepare,
And with bent hands expect the furious war. 40
O’er my sleek skin now gather’d dust he throws,
And yellow sand his mighty muscles strows.
Oft he my neck and nimble legs assails,
He seems to grasp me, but as often fails,
Each part he now invades with eager hand ; 45
Safe in my bulk, immoveable I stand.
So when loud storms break high, and foam and roar
Against some mole that stretches from the shore ;
The firm foundation lasting tempests braves,
Defies the warring winds and driving waves. 50

‘ Awhile we breathe, then forward rush amain,
Renew the combat, and our ground maintain ;
Foot strove with foot, I prone extend my breast,
Hands war with hands, and forehead, forehead press’d.
Thus have I seen two furious bulls engage, 55
Inflamed with equal love, and equal rage ;
Each claims the fairest heifer of the grove,
And conquest only can decide their love :
The trembling herds survey the sight from far,
Till victory decides th’ important war. 60
Three times in vain he strove my joints to wrest ;
To force my hold, and throw me from his breast ;
The fourth he broke my gripe, that clasp’d him round,
Then with new force he stretch’d me on the ground ;

Close to my back the mighty burden clung, 65
 As if a mountain o'er my limbs were flung.
 Believe my tale ; nor do I boastful aim
 By feign'd narration to extol my fame.
 No sooner from his grasp I freedom get,
 Unlock my arms, that flow'd with trickling sweat, 70
 But quick he seized me, and renew'd the strife,
 As my exhausted bosom pants for life ;
 My neck he gripes, my knee to earth he strains ;
 I fall, and bite the sand with shame and pains.

' O'er-match'd in strength, to wiles, and arts I
 take, 75
 And slip his hold, in form of speckled snake ;
 Who, when I wreathed in spires my body round,
 Or show'd my forky tongue with hissing sound,
 Smiles at my threats. Such foes my cradle knew,
 He cries, dire snakes my infant hand o'erthrew ; 80
 A dragon's form might other conquests gain,
 To war with me you take that shape in vain.
 Art thou proportion'd to the Hydra's length,
 Who by his wounds received augmented strength ?
 He raised a hundred hissing heads in air ; 85
 When one I lopp'd, up-sprung a dreadful pair.
 By his wounds fertile, and with slaughter strong,
 Singly I quell'd him, and stretch'd dead along,
 What can'st thou do, a form precarious, prone,
 To rouse my rage with terrors not thy own ? 90
 He said ; and round my neck his hands he cast,
 And with his straining fingers wrung me fast :
 My throat he tortured, close as pincers clasp,
 In vain I strove to loose the forceful grasp.

' Thus vanquish'd too, a third form still remains, 95
 Changed to a bull, my lowing fills the plains.
 Straight on the left his nervous arms were thrown,
 Upon my brindled neck, and tugg'd it down ;
 Then deep he struck my horn into the sand,
 And fell'd my bulk along the dusty land. 100
 Nor yet his fury cool'd ; 'twixt rage and scorn,
 From my maim'd front he tore the stubborn horn ;
 This, heap'd with flowers, and fruits, the Naiads bear,
 Sacred to plenty, and the bounteous year.'
 He spoke ; when lo, a beauteous nymph appears, 105
 Girt like Diana's train, with flowing hairs ;
 The horn she brings in which all autumn's stored,
 And ruddy apples for the second board.

Now morn begins to dawn, the sun's bright fire
 Gilds the high mountains, and the youths retire ; 110
 Nor stay'd they, till the troubled stream subsides,
 And in its bounds with peaceful current glides.
 But Acheloüs in his oozy bed
 Deep hides his brow deform'd and rustic head :
 No real wound the victor's triumph show'd, 115
 But his lost honours grieved the wat'ry god ;
 Yet ev'n that loss the willow's leaves o'erspread,
 And verdant reeds, in garlands, bind his head.

THE DEATH OF NESSUS THE CENTAUR

THIS virgin, too, thy love, O Nessus found,
 To her alone you owe the fatal wound.
 As the strong son of Jove his bride conveys,
 Where his paternal lands their bulwarks raise ;

Where from her slopy urn Evenus pours 5
 Her rapid current, swell'd by wintry showers,
 He came. The frequent eddies whirl'd the tide,
 And the deep rolling waves all pass denied.
 As for himself, he stood unmoved by fears.
 For now his bridal charge employ'd his cares. 10
 The strong-limb'd Nessus thus officious cried
 (For he the shallows of the stream had tried),
 Swim thou, Alcides, all thy strength prepare,
 On yonder bank I'll lodge thy nuptial care.

Th' Aonian chief to Nessus trusts his wife, 15
 All pale, and trembling for her hero's life :
 Clothed as he stood in the fierce lion's hide,
 The laden quiver o'er his shoulder tied,
 (For cross the stream his bow and club were cast)
 Swift he plunged in ; these billows shall be pass'd, 20
 He said, nor sought where smoother waters glide,
 But stemm'd the rapid dangers of the tide.
 The bank he reach'd ; again the bow he bears ;
 When, hark ! his bride's known voice alarms his ears.
 Nessus, to thee I call (aloud he cries), 25
 Vain is thy trust in flight, be timely wise :
 Thou monster double-shaped, my right set free :
 If thou no rev'rence owe my fame and me,
 Yet kindred should thy lawless lust deny.
 Think not, perfidious wretch, from me to fly, 30
 Tho' wing'd with horse's speed ; wounds shall
 pursue :
 Swift as his words the fatal arrow flew :
 The Centaur's back admits the feather'd wood,
 And thro' his breast the barbed weapon stood ;

Which when in anguish thro' the flesh he tore, 35
 From both the wounds gush'd forth the spumy gore.
 Mix'd with Lernæan venom ; this he took,
 Nor dire revenge his dying breast forsook.
 His garment, in the reeking purple dyed,
 To rouse love's passion, he presents the bride. 40

THE DEATH OF HERCULES

Now a long interval of time succeeds,
 When the great son of Jove's immortal deeds,
 And step-dame's hate had fill'd earth's utmost round ;
 He from Œchalia, with new laurels crown'd,
 In triumph was return'd. He rites prepares, 5
 And to the king of gods directs his prayers ;
 When fame (who falsehood clothes in truth's disguise
 And swells her little bulk with growing lies)
 The tender ear, O Deïanira moved,
 That Hercules the fair Iole loved. 10
 Her love believes the tale ; the truth she fears
 Of his new passion, and gives way to tears.
 The flowing tears diffused her wretched grief,
 Why seek I thus, from streaming eyes, relief ?
 She cries ; indulge not thus these fruitless cares, 15
 The harlot will but triumph in thy tears :
 Let something be resolved, while yet there's time ;
 My bed not conscious of a rival's crime.
 In silence shall I mourn, or loud complain ?
 Shall I seek Calydon, or here remain ? 20
 What tho' allied to Meleager's fame,

I boast the honours of a sister's name ?
 My wrongs, perhaps, now urge me to pursue
 Some desp'rate deed, by which the world shall view
 How far revenge, and woman's rage can rise, 25
 When welt'ring in her blood the harlot dies.

Thus various passions ruled by turns her breast.
 She now resolves to send the fatal vest,
 Dyed with Lernæan gore, whose power might move
 His soul anew, and rouse declining love. 30
 Nor knew she what her sudden rage bestows,
 When she to Lychas trusts her future woes ;
 With soft endearments she the boy commands
 To bear the garment to her husband's hands.

Th' unwitting hero takes the gift in haste, 35
 And o'er his shoulders Lerna's poison cast,
 As first the fire with frankincense he strows,
 And utters to the gods his holy vows ;
 And on the marble altar's polish'd frame
 Pours forth the grapy stream : the rising flame 40
 Sudden dissolves the subtle pois'nous juice,
 Which taints his blood, and all his nerves bedews.

With wonted fortitude he bore the smart,
 And not a groan confess'd his burning heart.
 At length his patience was subdued with pain, 45
 He rends the sacred altar from the plain ;
 Cete's wide forests echo with his cries :
 Now to rip off the deathful robe he tries,
 Where'er he plucks the vest, the skin he tears,
 The mangled muscles and huge bones he bares, 50

(A ghastful sight !) or raging with his pain,
 To rend the sticking plague he tugs in vain.
 As the red iron hisses in the flood,
 So boils the venom in his curdling blood.
 Now with the greedy flame his entrails glow, 55
 And livid sweats down all his body flow ;
 The cracking nerves burnt up are burst in twain,
 The lurking venom melts his swimming brain.

Then, lifting both his hands aloft, he cries :
 ‘ Glut thy revenge, dread empress of the skies ; 60
 Sate with my death the rancour of thy heart,
 Look down with pleasure, and enjoy my smart.
 Or, if e’er pity moved a hostile breast
 (For here I stand thy enemy profest),
 Take hence this hateful life, with tortures torn, 65
 Inured to trouble, and to labours born.
 Death is the gift most welcome to my woe,
 And such a gift a step-dame may bestow !
 Was it for this Busiris was subdued,
 Whose barb’rous temples reek’d with strangers’
 blood ? 70
 Press’d in these arms his fate Antæus found,
 Nor gain’d recruited vigour from the ground.
 Did I not triple-form’d Geryon fell ?
 Or did I fear the triple dog of hell ?
 Did not these hands the bull’s arm’d forehead hold ? 75
 Are not our mighty toils in Elis told ?
 Did not Stymphalian lakes proclaim my fame ?
 And fair Parthenian woods resound my name ?
 Who seized the golden belt of Thermodon ?
 And who the dragon-guarded apples won ? 80

Could the fierce Centaur's strength my force with-
stand

Or the fell boar that spoil'd th' Arcadian land?

Did not these arms the Hydra's rage subdue,

Who from his wounds to double fury grew?

What if the Thracian horses fat with gore, 85

Who human bodies in their mangers tore,

I saw, and with their barb'rous lord o'erthrew?

What if these hands Nemæa's lion slew?

Did not this neck the heav'nly globe sustain?—

The female partner of the thund'rer's reign 90

Fatigued at length suspends her harsh commands, "

Yet no fatigue hath slack'd these valiant hands.

But now new plagues pursue me; neither force

Nor arms nor darts can stop their raging course.

Devouring flame through my rack'd entrails strays, 95

And on my lungs and shrivell'd muscles preys;

Yet still Eurystheus breathes the vital air.

What mortal now shall seek the gods with prayer?'

THE TRANSFORMATION OF LYCHAS INTO A ROCK

THE hero said; and with the torture stung,

Furious o'er Cete's lofty hills he sprung:

Stuck with the shaft, thus scours the tiger round,

And seeks the flying author of his wound.

Now might you see him trembling, now he vents

His anguish'd soul in groans, and loud laments;

He strives to tear the clinging vest in vain,

And with up-rooted forests strows the plain;

Now kindling into rage, his hands he rears
 And to his kindred gods directs his prayers. 10
 When Lychas, lo, he spies ; who trembling flew,
 And in a hollow rock conceal'd from view,
 Had shunn'd his wrath. Now grief renew'd his pain,
 His madness chafed, and thus he raves again :

‘ Lychas, to thee alone my fate I owe, 15
 Who bore the gift the cause of all my woe.’
 The youth all pale with shiv’ring fear was stung,
 And vain excuses falter’d on his tongue.
 Alcides snatch’d him as with suppliant face
 He strove to clasp his knees and beg for grace : 20
 He toss’d him o’er his head with airy course,
 And hurl’d with more than with an engine’s force :
 Far o’er the Eubœan main aloft he flies,
 And hardens by degrees amid the skies :
 So show’ry drops, when chilly tempests blow, 25
 Thicken at first then whiten into snow ;
 In balls congeal’d the rolling fleeces bound,
 In solid hail result upon the ground.
 Thus whirl’d with nervous force thro’ distant air,
 The purple tide forsook his veins with fear ; 30
 All moisture left his limbs. Transform’d to stone
 In ancient days the craggy flint was known :
 Still in th’ Eubœan waves his front he rears,
 Still the small rock in human form appears,
 And still the name of hapless Lychas bears. 35 }

Fire shall devour ; while what from me he drew
 Shall live immortal, and its force subdue ; 30
 That, when he 's dead, I'll raise to realms above ;
 May all the powers the righteous act approve,
 If any god dissent, and judge too great
 The sacred honours of the heav'nly seat,
 Ev'n he shall own his deeds deserve the sky, 35
 Ev'n he, reluctant, shall at length comply.
 Th' assembled powers assent. No frown till now
 Had mark'd with passion vengeful Juno's brow.
 Meanwhile whate'er was in the power of flame
 Was all consumed ; his body's nervous frame 40
 No more was known ;—of human form bereft,
 Th' eternal part of Jove alone was left.
 As an old serpent casts his scaly vest,
 Wreathes in the sun, in youthful glory drest ;
 So when Alcides mortal mould resign'd, 45
 His better part enlarged and grew refined,
 August his visage shone ; almighty Jove
 In his swift car his honour'd offspring drove ;
 High o'er the hollow clouds the coursers fly,
 And lodge the hero in the starry sky. 50

THE TRANSFORMATION OF GALANTHIS

ATLAS perceived the load of heaven's new guest.
 Revenge still rancour'd in Eurystheus' breast
 Against Alcides' race. Alcmena goes
 To Iole to vent maternal woes ;
 Here she pours forth her grief, recounts the spoils 5
 Her son had bravely reap'd in glorious toils.

This Iole by Hercules' commands,
 Hyllus had loved and join'd in nuptial bands.
 Her swelling womb the teeming birth confess'd ;—
 To whom Alcmena thus her speech address'd : 10

' O may the gods protect thee, in that hour,
 When midst thy throes, thou call'st th' Ilithyian
 power !
 May no delays prolong thy racking pain,
 As when I sued for Juno's aid in vain.

' When now Alcides' mighty birth drew nigh, 15
 And the tenth sign roll'd forward on the sky,
 My womb extends with such a mighty load,
 As Jove the parent of the burden show'd.
 I could no more th' increasing smart sustain :
 My horror kindles to recount the pain ; 20
 Cold chills my limbs while I the tale pursue,
 And now methinks I feel my pangs anew.
 Sev'n days and nights amidst incessant throes,
 Fatigued with ills I lay, nor knew repose ;
 When lifting high my hands, in shrieks I pray'd, 25
 Implored the gods, and call'd Lucina's aid.
 She came, but prejudiced, to give my fate
 A sacrifice to vengeful Juno's hate.
 She hears the groaning anguish of my fits,
 And on the altar at my door she sits, 30
 O'er her left knee her crossing leg she cast,
 Then knits her fingers close, and wrings them fast :
 This stay'd the birth ; in mutt'ring verse she pray'd
 The mutt'ring verse th' unfinish'd birth delay'd.

Now with fierce struggles, raging with my pain, 35
At Jove's ingratitude I rave in vain.
How did I wish for death ! such groans I sent,
As might have made the flinty heart relent.
Now the Cadmeian matrons round me press,
Offer their vows, and seek to bring redress. 40
Among the Theban dames Galanthis stands,
Strong-limb'd, red-hair'd, and just to my commands :
She first perceived that all these racking woes
From the persisting hate of Juno rose.
As here and there she pass'd, by chance she sees 45
The seated goddess ; on her close-press'd knees,
Her fast-knit hands she leans ; with cheerful voice
Galanthis cries, " Whoe'er thou art, rejoice,
Congratulate the dame, she lies at rest,
At length the gods Alcmena's womb have blest." 50
Swift from her seat the startled goddess springs,
No more conceal'd, her hands abroad she flings ;
The charm unloosed, the birth my pangs relieved ;
Galanthis' laughter vex'd the power deceived.
Fame says, the goddess dragg'd the laughing maid 55
Fast by the hair ; in vain her force essay'd,
Her grov'ling body from the ground to rear ;
Changed to fore-feet her shrinking arms appear :
Her hairy back her former hue retains,
The form alone is lost ; her strength remains ; 60
Who since the lie did from her mouth proceed,
Shall from her pregnant mouth bring forth her breed ;
Nor shall she quit her long-frequented home,
But haunt those houses where she loved to roam.'

THE STORY OF IOLAÛS RESTORED TO YOUTH

WHILE Iole the fatal change declares,
 Alcmena's pitying hand oft wiped her tears.
 Grief, too, stream'd down her cheeks; soon sorrow
 flies, }
 And rising joy the trickling moisture dries,
 Lo, Iolaüs stands before their eyes. } 5
 A youth he stood; and the soft down began
 O'er his smooth chin to spread, and promise man.
 Hebe submitted to her husband's prayers,
 Instill'd new vigour, and restored his years.

THE PROPHECY OF THEMIS

Now from her lips a solemn oath had pass'd,
 That Iolaüs this gift alone should taste,
 Had not just Themis thus maturely said,
 (Which check'd her vow and awed the blooming
 maid):
 'Thebes is embroil'd in war. Capaneus stands 5
 Invincible, but by the Thund'rer's hands
 Ambition shall the guilty brothers¹ fire,
 Both rush to mutual wounds, and both expire.
 The reeling earth shall ope her gloomy womb,
 Where the yet breathing bard² shall find his tomb— 10
 The son³ shall bathe his hands in parents' blood,
 And in one act be both unjust and good.

¹ Eteocles and Polynices.² Amphiaraüs.³ Alcmaeon.

Of home and sense deprived, where'er he flies,
 The furies and his mother's ghost he spies.
 His wife the fatal bracelet shall implore, 15
 And Phegeus stain his sword in kindred gore.
 Calirrhoë shall then with suppliant prayer
 Prevail on Jupiter's relenting ear.
 Jove shall with youth her infant sons inspire,
 And bid their bosoms glow with manly fire.' 20

THE DEBATE OF THE GODS ·

WHEN Themis thus with prescient voice had spoke,
 Among the gods a various murmur broke ;
 Dissension rose in each immortal breast,
 That one should grant what was denied the rest.
 Aurora for her aged spouse complains, 5
 And Ceres grieves for Jason's freezing veins ;
 Vulcan would Erichthonius' years renew ;
 Her future race the care of Venus drew,
 She would Anchises' blooming age restore ;
 A different care employ'd each heav'nly power : 10
 Thus various int'rests did their jars increase,
 Till Jove arose : he spoke ; their tumults cease :—

—' Is any rev'rence to our presence giv'n ?
 Then why this discord 'mong the powers of heav'n ?
 Who can the settled will of Fate subdue ? 15
 'Twas by the Fates that Iolaüs knew
 A second youth. The Fates determined doom
 Shall give Calirrhoë's race a youthful bloom.

Arms nor ambition can this power obtain ;
 Quell your desires ; ev'n me the fates restrain. 20
 Could I their will control, no rolling years
 Had Æacus bent down with silver hairs ;
 Then Rhadamanthus still had youth possess'd,
 And Minos with eternal bloom been bless'd.'

Jove's words the synod moved ; the powers give
 o'er, 25
 And urge in vain unjust complaint no more.
 Since Rhadamanthus' veins now slowly flow'd,
 And Æacus, and Minos bore the load ;
 Minos who in the flower of youth and fame,
 Made mighty nations tremble at his name, 30
 Infirm with age, the proud Miletus fears,
 Vain of his birth, and in the strength of years ;
 And now, regarding all his realms as lost,
 He durst not force him from his native coast,
 But you by choice, Miletus, fled his reign, 35
 And your swift vessel plough'd th' Ægean main ;
 On Asiatic shores a town you frame,
 Which still is honour'd with the founder's name.
 Here you Cyane knew, the beauteous maid,
 As on her father's winding banks she stray'd : 40
 Caunus and Byblis hence their lineage trace,
 The double offspring of your warm embrace.

PROLOGUES AND
EPILOGUES

GAY wrote nearly a dozen pieces for the stage. Five of these—viz., *The Mohocks*, *The Wife of Bath*, *The What d'ye call it*, *Three Hours after Marriage*, and *The Captives*—were fitted with both prologues and epilogues: *Dione*, *The Beggar's Opera*, *Polly*, and *Achilles* had prologues only; while the *Distrest Wife* and the *Rehearsal at Gotham* (both of which were printed after Gay's death) had neither prologues nor epilogues. The prologue to *The Beggar's Opera*, like that to *Polly*, takes the form of a prose dialogue, and is consequently not given here. That to *Three Hours after Marriage* is probably from the pen of Pope,—it has, at any rate, been claimed as his by Roscoe, Carruthers, and Courthope. It is inserted in this section as forming part of a play in which Gay, Pope, and Arbuthnot all collaborated, but for which Gay was held chiefly to blame.

PROLOGUES AND EPILOGUES

'THE MOHOCKS' (1712)

THE PROLOGUE

To be spoken by the Publisher

THIS farce, if the kind players had thought fit,
With action had supplied its want of wit.
Oh, readers ! had you seen the Mohocks' rage,
And frighted watchmen tremble on the stage ;
Had you but seen our mighty Emp'ror stalk ; 5
And heard, in Cloudy, honest Dicky talk,
Seen Pinkethman in strutting Prig appear,
And, 'midst of danger, wisely lead the rear,
It might have pleased ; for nowadays the joke
Rises or falls as with grimace 'tis spoke. 10
As matters stand, there 's but this only way,
T' applaud our disappointed author's play :
Let all those hands that would have clapp'd, combine
To take the whole impression off from mine.
That 's a sure way to raise the poet's name : 15
A new edition gains immortal fame !

THE EPILOGUE

*Designed to be spoken by the person who should have
played 'Joan Cloudy'*

WHAT woful things do we poor folks endure,
 To keep our spouses to ourselves secure?
 We wives—(of one and all this may be said)—
 Ne'er think our husbands safe,—but when in bed.
 But now, to quit the wife—How would it please ye, 5
 Could you dissolve the marriage noose as easy?
 Marriage would then no more entail for life,
 And coquets venture on the name of wife:
 What woman would not—if this scheme would do,
 Just for a frolic—take a spouse or two? 10
 Ye critics that are scatter'd o'er the pit,
 And stare and gape to catch descending wit,
 Mere Mohocks, that on harmless authors prey,
 And damn for want of sense a modern play.
 I vow 'tis hard!—Yet if it must be so, 15
 I still must ask one favour ere I go.
 If you condemn him, grant him a reprieve,
 Three days of grace to the young sinner give,
 And then, if this sad downfall does delight ye,
 As witness of his Exit, I invite ye. 20

'THE WIFE OF BATH' (1713)

PROLOGUE

Spoken by Mrs. Mountfort

IF ancient poets thought the Prologue fit,
 To sport away superfluous starts of wit ;
 Why should we moderns lavish ours away,
 And, to supply the Prologue, starve the Play?
 Thus plays, of late, like marriages in fashion, 5
 Have nothing good besides the preparation.
 How shall we do to help our author out,
 Who both for Play and Prologue is in doubt ?
 He draws his characters from Chaucer's days,
 On which our grandsires are profuse of praise ; 10
 When all mankind (if we 'll believe tradition)
 Jogg'd on in settled conjugal fruition ;
 Then, as old wives with serious nod will tell us,
 The wise, contented husband ne'er was jealous ;
 The youthful bride no sep'rate trading drives, 15
 Ev'n citizens could—satisfy their wives.
 The cautious virgin, ignorant of man,
 No glances threw, nor exercised the fan,
 Found love a stranger to her easy breast,
 And, 'till the wedding night—enjoy'd her rest. 20
 No gilded chariot drew the ladies' eyes,
 Ensnared their hearts, and bore away the prize ;

Then the strict father no hard bargains drove
 For jointures—all their settlement was—love.
 Believe all this who will,—for let me die ! 25
 They knew the world as well as you and I.
 Lovers would then,—as nowadays, forswear,
 Seize the soft moment, and surprise the fair,
 And many a modest, knowing bride was led
 With artful blushes to the nuptial bed. 30
 Our author hath from former ages shown,
 Some ancient frailties which are still our own ;
 The Wife of Bath in our weak wives we find,
 And superstition runs through all the kind ;
 We but repeat our grandsires' actions o'er 35
 And copy follies which were theirs before.

EPILOGUE

Spoken by Mrs. Bicknell

THE Toil of Wedlock five times bravely past,
 You'll say 'twas cruel to be baulk'd at last.
 Grown old in Cupid's camp—long versed in arms,
 I from my youth have known the power of charms :
 Was I to single combat ever slow ? 5
 Did I e'er turn my back upon the foe ?
 Is this the way old service is rewarded,
 And must the joyless widow be discarded ?
 Stint me not, Love—but while I yet survive,
 Throw in another comfort to the five. 10
 Bless me ! when I reflect on former days !
 Youth can make conquest sev'ral thousand ways ;

I danced ; I sang ; I smiled—I looked demure,
 And caught each lover with a diff'rent lure :
 In frequent wedlock join'd, was woman still, 15
 And bow'd subservient husbands to my will.
 If reason governs man's superior mind,
 A ready cunning prompts the female kind.
 Then learn from me—so, Hymen, bless your lives,
 Preserve the just prerogative of wives ; 20
 Know to command each look, each tear, each smile,
 With eyes, and face, and tongue, and heart
 beguile :
 Ev'n he that loves in search of game to roam,
 By feign'd reprisals may be kept at home.
 Whenever Heav'n was pleased to take my spouse, 25
 I never pined for thought of former vows ;
 'Tis true, I sigh'd, I wept, I sobb'd at first,
 And tore my hair—as decent widows—must ;
 But soon another husband dry'd mine eyes :
 My life, my dear !—supply'd the place of sighs : 30
 Amidst continual love I've relish'd life,
 A forward maid and a triumphant wife.
 Then grant, O Cupid, this my latest prayer,
 If no kind husband will relieve my care ;
 Since inclination yet outlives my face, 35
 At least indulge me with a *coup de grâce*.

‘THREE HOURS AFTER MARRIAGE’

(1717)

PROLOGUE

AUTHORS are judged by strange capricious rules,
The great ones are thought mad, the small ones
fools.

Yet sure the best are most severely fated,
For fools are only laugh'd at, wits are hated.
Blockheads with reason, men of sense abhor ; 5
But fool 'gainst fool, is barb'rous civil war.
Why on all authors, then, should critics fall ?
Since some have writ, and shown no wit at all.
Condemn a play of theirs, and they evade it,
Cry, ‘Damn not us, but damn the French that
made it ;’ 10

By running goods, these graceless owlers gain,
Theirs are the rules of France, the plots of Spain :
But wit, like wine, from happier climates brought,
Dash'd by these rogues, turns English common
draught ;

They pall Molière's and Lope's sprightly strain, 15
And teach dull harlequins to grin in vain.
How shall our author hope a gentle fate,
Who dares most impudently—not translate.
It had been civil in these ticklish times, 19
To fetch his fools and knaves from foreign climes ;

Spaniard and French abuse to the world's end,
 But spare old England, lest you hurt a friend.
 If any fool is by our satire bit,
 Let him hiss loud, to show you all—he 's hit.
 Poets make characters as salesmen clothes, 25
 We take no measure of your fops and beaus ;
 But here all sizes and all shapes ye meet,
 And fit yourselves—like chaps in Monmouth Street.

Shows a
 cap with
 ears.

Gallants, look here ! This fool's-cap has an air—
 Goodly and smart—with ears of Issachar. 30
 Let no one fool engross it, or confine :
 A common blessing ! now 'tis yours, now mine.
 But poets in all ages, had the care
 To keep this cap, for such as will, to wear ;
 Our author has it now, for ev'ry wit 35
 Of course resign'd it to the next that writ :
 And thus upon the stage 'tis fairly thrown,
 Let him that takes it, wear it as his own.

Flings
 down the
 cap and
 exit.

EPILOGUE

Spoken by Mrs. Oldfield

THE ancient Epilogue, as critics write,
 Was 'Clap your hands, excuse us, and good-night ;'
 The modern always was a kind essay
 To reconcile the audience to the play :
 More polish'd we of late have learn'd to fly, 5
 At parties, treaties, nations, ministry.

Our author more genteelly leaves these brawls
 To coffee-houses, and to cobblers' stalls.
 His very monsters are of sweet condition,
 None but the crocodile s a politician ; 10
 He reaps the blessings of his double nature,
 And, trimmer like, can live on land or water :
 Yet this same monster should be kindly treated,
 He liked a lady's flesh—but not to eat it.

As for my other spark, my favourite mummy, 15
 His feats were such, smart youths ! as might be-
 come ye ;
 Dead as he seem'd he had sure signs of life ;
 His hieroglyphics pleased the doctor's wife.

Whom can our well-bred poetess displease ?
 She wrote, like quality—with wondrous ease : 20
 All her offence was harmless want of wit ;
 Is that a crime ?—Ye powers preserve the pit !

My doctor, too, to give the dev'l his due,
 When ev'ry creature did his spouse pursue,
 (Men sound and living, bury'd flesh, dried fish), 25
 Was ev'n as civil as a wife could wish.

Yet he was somewhat saucy with his phial ;
 What ! Put young maids to that unnatural trial !
 So hard a test ! Why, if you needs will make it,
 Faith, let us marry first—and then we 'll take it. 30

Who could be angry though like Fossile teased ?
 Consider, in three hours the man was eased.
 How many of you are for life beguiled,
 And keep as well the mother, as the child !
 None but a tar could be so tender-hearted, 35
 To claim a wife that had been three years parted ;

Would you do this, my friends?—Believe me, never ;
When modishly you part—you part for ever.

Join then your voices ! Be the play excused
For once, though no one living is abused ; 40
To that bright circle which commands our duties,
To you superior eighteen-penny beauties,
To the laced hat and cockade of the pit,
To all, in one word, we our cause submit,
Who think good breeding is akin to wit. 45

PROLOGUE

Designed for the Pastoral Tragedy of 'Dione'

THERE was a time (O, were those days renew'd!)
Ere tyrant laws had woman's will subdued ;
Then nature ruled, and love devoid of art,
Spoke the consenting language of the heart.
Love uncontroll'd ! insipid, poor delight ! 5
'Tis the restraint that whets our appetite.
Behold the beasts who range the forests free,
Behold the birds who fly from tree to tree ;
In their amours see nature's power appear !
And do they love ? Yes—one month in the year. 10
Were these the pleasures of the golden reign ?
And did free nature thus instruct the swain ?
I envy not, ye nymphs, your am'rous bowers :
Such harmless swains !—I 'm even content with ours.

But yet there 's something in these sylvan scenes 15
 That tells our fancy what the lover means :
 Name but the mossy bank, and moonlight grove,
 Is there a heart that does not beat with love ?

To-night we treat you with such country fare,
 Then for your lover's sake our author spare. 20
 He draws no Hemskirk boors, or home-bred clowns,
 But the soft shepherds of Arcadia's downs.

When Paris on the three his judgment pass'd ;
 I hope, you 'll own the shepherd show'd his taste :
 And Jove, all know, was a good judge of beauty, 25
 Who made the nymph Calisto break her duty ;
 Then was the country nymph no awkward thing.
 See what strange revolutions time can bring !

Yet still methinks our author's fate I dread,
 Were it not safer beaten paths to tread 30
 Of tragedy, than o'er wide heaths to stray,
 And seeking strange adventures lose his way ?
 No trumpet's clangour makes his heroine start,
 And tears the soldier from her bleeding heart ;
 He, foolish bard ! nor pomp nor show regards. 35
 Without the witness of a hundred guards
 His lovers sigh their vows.—If sleep should take ye,
 He has no battle, no loud drum to wake ye.
 What, no such shifts ? there 's danger in 't, 'tis true ;
 Yet spare him, as he gives you something new. 40

'THE CAPTIVES' (1724)

PROLOGUE

Spoken by Mr. Wilks

I WISH some author careless of renown,
 Would without formal prologue risk the town.
 For what is told you by this useless ditty?
 Only that tragedy should move your pity :
 That when you see theatric heroes shown, 5
 Their virtues you should strive to make your own.
 What gain we by this solemn way of teaching?
 Our precepts mend your lives no more than preaching.

Since, then, our Bard declines this beaten path ;
 What if we lash'd the critics into wrath ? 10
 Poets should ne'er be drones; mean, harmless things;
 But guard, like bees, their labours by their stings.
 That mortal sure must all ambition smother,
 Who dares not hurt one man to please another.
 What? sink a joke ! That 's but a mere pretence : 15
 He shows most wit who gives the most offence.
 But still our squeamish author satire loathes,
 As children, physic ; or as women, oaths.
 He knows he 's at the bar, and must submit ;
 For ev'ry man is born a judge of wit. 20
 How can you err? Plays are like paintings tried,
 You first inquire the hand and then decide :
 Yet judge him not before the curtain draws,
 Lest a fair hearing should reverse the cause.

EPILOGUE

Spoken by Mrs. Oldfield

SHALL authors tease the town with tragic passion,
 When we 've more modern moral things in fashion?
 Let poets quite exhaust the Muse's treasure ;
 Sure masquerades must give more feeling pleasure,
 Where we meet finer sense and better measure ; 5
 The married dame whose business must be done,
 Puts on the holy vestments of a nun ;
 And brings her unprolific spouse a son.
 Coquettes with whom no lover could succeed,
 Here pay off all arrears, and love in—deed. 10
 Ev'n conscious prudes are so sincere and free,
 They ask each man they meet—Do you know me ?

Do not our operas unbend the mind,
 Where ev'ry soul 's to ecstasy refined ?
 Entranced with sound sits each seraphic toast : 15
 All ladies love the play that moves the most.
 Ev'n in this house I've known some tender fair,
 Touch'd with mere sense alone, confess a tear.
 But the soft voice of an Italian wether,
 Makes them all languish three whole hours together, 20
 And where 's the wonder ? Plays, like Mass, are sung
 (Religious Drama !)—in an unknown tongue.

Will poets ne'er consider what they cost us ?
 What tragedy can take like Doctor Faustus ?
 Two stages in this moral show excel 25
 To frighten vicious youth with scenes of hell ;

Yet both these Faustuses can warn but few,
For what's a conj'rer's fate to me—or you?

Yet there are wives who think heav'n worth their
care ;
But first they kindly send their spouses there. 30
When you my lover's last distress behold,
Does not each husband's thrilling blood run cold?
Some heroes only die.—Ours finds a wife.
What's harder than captivity for life?
Yet men, ne'er warned, still court their own undoing. 35
Who, for that circle, would but venture ruin?

'ACHILLES: AN OPERA' (1733)

PROLOGUE

Spoken by Mr. Quin

I WONDER not our author doubts success,
One in his circumstance can do no less.
The dancer on the rope that tries at all,
In each unpractised caper risks a fall:
I own I dread his ticklish situation ; 5
Critics detest poetic innovation.
Had Ic'rus been content with solid ground,
The giddy vent'rous youth had ne'er been drown'd.

The Pegasus of old had fire and force,
But your true modern is a carrier's horse, 10
Drawn by the foremost bell, afraid to stray ;
Bard following bard, jogs on the beaten way.
Why is this man so obstinate an elf?
Will he, alone, not imitate himself?

His scene now shows the heroes of old Greece ; 15
But how? 'tis monstrous ! in a comic piece.
To buskins, plumes, and helmets what pretence,
If mighty chiefs must speak but common sense?
Shall no bold diction, no poetic rage,
Foam at our mouths and thunder on the stage? 20
No,—'tis Achilles, as he came from Chiron,
Just taught to sing as well as wield cold iron ;
And whatsoever critics may suppose,
Our author holds that what he spoke was prose.

THE FABLES

VOLUME THE FIRST

THE first series of Gay's *Fables* was published in 1727. The title-page, which bears a vignette of a mask, runs as follows :— 'Fables. | by Mr Gay | London : | printed for J. Tonson and J. Watts | MDCCXXVII.' In immediate sequence to the title-page is a dedication to the young Duke of Cumberland : 'To his Highness William, Duke of Cumberland, these new Fables, invented for his amusement, are humbly dedicated by his Highness's most faithful and most obedient servant, John Gay.' The plates in the text were designed by Kent, the architect, and by John Wootton, the animal painter, and were engraved by Fourdrinier, Baron, and Vandergucht.

The second series—or volume—of Gay's *Fables* was published ten years later. The author, in a letter to Swift, dated May 16, 1732, says : 'You seemed not to approve of my writing more fables. Those I am now writing have a prefatory discourse before each of them, by way of epistle, and the morals of most of them are of the political kind, which makes them run into a greater length than those I have already published. I have already finished about fifteen or sixteen. Four or five more would make a volume of the same size as the first.' (Elwin's *Works of Pope*, vii. 268.) These fables were, some years after Gay's death, published in a second volume—a quarto like the first—which bore the following title-page :—'Fables. | By the late Mr. Gay. | Volume the second. | London : | Printed for J. and P. Knapton in Ludgate Street | and T. Cox under the Royal Exchange | MDCCXXXVIII.' Preceding the text was the explanatory advertisement, printed on p. 138. There is also a frontispiece representing Gay's tomb in Westminster Abbey, with Pope's oft-quoted epitaph ; and the title-page vignette is a medallion portrait of the poet. Both of these are drawn by Gravelot and engraved by Scotin ; the full-page illustrations being also by the same artist and engraver.

VOLUME THE FIRST

INTRODUCTION TO THE FABLES

THE SHEPHERD AND THE PHILOSOPHER

REMOTE from cities lived a swain,
Unvex'd with all the cares of gain ;
His head was silver'd o'er with age,
And long experience made him sage ;
In summer's heat, and winter's cold, 5
He fed his flock and penn'd the fold ;
His hours in cheerful labour flew,
Nor envy nor ambition knew :
His wisdom and his honest fame
Through all the country raised his name. 10

A deep Philosopher (whose rules
Of moral life were drawn from schools)
The Shepherd's homely cottage sought,
And thus explored his reach of thought.
Whence is thy learning? Hath thy toil 15
O'er books consumed the midnight oil ?
Hast thou old Greece and Rome survey'd,
And the vast sense of Plato weigh'd ?
Hath Socrates thy soul refined,
And hast thou fathom'd Tully's mind ? 20

Or, like the wise Ulysses thrown
 By various fates on realms unknown,
 Hast thou through many cities stray'd,
 Their customs, laws, and manners weigh'd ?

The Shepherd modestly replied, 25
 I ne'er the paths of learning tried ;
 Nor have I roam'd in foreign parts
 To read mankind, their laws and arts ;
 For man is practised in disguise,
 He cheats the most discerning eyes ; 30
 Who by that search shall wiser grow,
 When we ourselves can never know ?
 The little knowledge I have gain'd,
 Was all from simple nature drain'd ;
 Hence my life's maxims took their rise, 35
 Hence grew my settled hate to vice.
 The daily labours of the bee
 Awake my soul to industry.
 Who can observe the careful ant,
 And not provide for future want ? 40
 My dog (the trustiest of his kind)
 With gratitude inflames my mind ;
 I mark his true, his faithful way,
 And in my service copy Tray.
 In constancy and nuptial love, 45
 I learn my duty from the dove.
 The hen, who from the chilly air,
 With pious wing protects her care,
 And ev'ry fowl that flies at large,
 Instructs me in a parent's charge. 50

From nature too I take my rule,
 To shun contempt and ridicule.
 I never, with important air,
 In conversation overbear.
 Can grave and formal pass for wise, 55
 When men the solemn owl despise ?
 My tongue within my lips I rein ;
 For who talks much, must talk in vain.
 We from the wordy torrent fly :
 Who listens to the chatt'ring pie ? 60
 Nor would I, with felonious sleight,
 By stealth invade my neighbour's right,
 Rapacious animals we hate :
 Kites, hawks, and wolves, deserve their fate.
 Do not we just abhorrence find 65
 Against the toad and serpent kind ?
 But envy, calumny, and spite
 Bear stronger venom in their bite.
 Thus ev'ry object of creation
 Can furnish hints to contemplation ; 70
 And from the most minute and mean,
 A virtuous mind can morals glean.
 Thy fame is just, the sage replies ;
 Thy virtue proves thee truly wise.
 Pride often guides the author's pen ; 75
 Books as affected are as men :
 But he who studies nature's laws,
 From certain truth his maxims draws ;
 And those, without our schools, suffice
 To make men moral, good, and wise. 80

FABLE I

THE LION, THE TIGER, AND THE TRAVELLER

ACCEPT, young Prince, the moral lay,
 And in these tales mankind survey ;
 With early virtues plant your breast,
 The specious arts of vice detest.
 Princes, like beauties, from their youth 5
 Are strangers to the voice of truth ;
 Learn to condemn all praise betimes ;
 For flattery's the nurse of crimes :
 Friendship by sweet reproof is shown,
 (A virtue never near a throne) ; 10
 In courts such freedom must offend,
 There none presumes to be a friend.
 To those of your exalted station
 Each courtier is a dedication.
 Must I too flatter like the rest, 15
 And turn my morals to a jest ?
 The Muse disdains to steal from those
 Who thrive in courts by fulsome prose.
 But shall I hide your real praise,
 Or tell you what a nation says ? 20
 They in your infant bosom trace
 The virtues of your royal race ;
 In the fair dawning of your mind
 Discern you gen'rous, mild, and kind ;
 They see you grieve to hear distress, 25
 And pant already to redress.

Go on, the height of good attain,
 Nor let a nation hope in vain.
 For hence we justly may presage
 The virtues of a riper age. 30
 True courage shall your bosom fire,
 And future actions own your sire.
 Cowards are cruel ; but the brave
 Love mercy, and delight to save.

A Tiger roaming for his prey, 35
 Sprung on a Trav'ler in the way ;
 The prostrate game a Lion spies,
 And on the greedy tyrant flies ;
 With mingled roar resounds the wood,
 Their teeth, their claws distil with blood , 40
 Till vanquish'd by the Lion's strength,
 The spotted foe extends his length.
 The Man besought the shaggy lord,
 And on his knees for life implored.
 His life the gen'rous hero gave ; 45
 Together walking to his cave,
 The Lion thus bespoke his guest :

What hardy beast shall dare contest
 My matchless strength? You saw the fight,
 And must attest my power and right. 50
 Forced to forego their native home,
 My starving slaves at distance roam.
 Within these woods I reign alone,
 The boundless forest is my own.
 Bears, wolves, and all the savage brood, 55
 Have dyed the regal den with blood.
 These carcasses on either hand,
 Those bones that whiten all the land,

My former deeds and triumphs, tell,
 Beneath these jaws what numbers fell. 60
 True, says the Man, the strength I saw
 Might well the brutal nation awe :
 But shall a monarch, brave like you,
 Place glory in so false a view?
 Robbers invade their neighbour's right. 65
 Be loved : let justice bound your might.
 Mean are ambitious heroes' boasts
 Of wasted lands and slaughter'd hosts.
 Pirates their power by murders gain,
 Wise kings by love and mercy reign. 70
 To me your clemency hath shown
 The virtue worthy of a throne.
 Heav'n gives you power above the rest,
 Like Heav'n to succour the distrest.
 The case is plain, the monarch said ; 75
 False glory hath my youth misled ;
 For beasts of prey, a servile train,
 Have been the flatt'ers of my reign.
 You reason well. Yet tell me, friend,
 Did ever you in courts attend ? 80
 For all my fawning rogues agree
 That human heroes rule like me.

FABLE II

THE SPANIEL AND THE CAMELEON

A SPANIEL, bred with all the care
 That waits upon a fav'rite heir,

Ne'er felt correction's rigid hand ;
 Indulged to disobey command,
 In pamper'd ease his hours were spent ; 5
 He never knew what learning meant.
 Such forward airs, so pert, so smart,
 Were sure to win his lady's heart ;
 Each little mischief gain'd him praise ;
 How pretty were his fawning ways ! 10
 The wind was south, the morning fair,
 He ventures forth to take the air.
 He ranges all the meadow round,
 And rolls upon the softest ground :
 When near him a Cameleon seen, 15
 Was scarce distinguish'd from the green.

Dear emblem of the flatt'ring host,
 What, live with clowns ! a genius lost !
 To cities and the court repair :
 A fortune cannot fail thee there : 20
 Preferment shall thy talents crown,
 Believe me, friend ; I know the town.
 Sir, says the Sycophant, like you,
 Of old, politer life I knew :
 Like you, a courtier born and bred, 25
 Kings lean'd their ear to what I said.
 My whisper always met success ;
 The ladies praised me for address.
 I knew to hit each courtier's passion,
 And flatter'd ev'ry vice in fashion. 30
 But Jove, who hates the liar's ways,
 At once cut short my prosp'rous days ;

And, sentenced to retain my nature,
 Transform'd me to this crawling creature.
 Doom'd to a life obscure and mean, 35
 I wander in the sylvan scene.
 For Jove the heart alone regards ;
 He punishes what man rewards.
 How diff'rent is thy case and mine !
 With men at least you sup and dine ; 40
 While I, condemn'd to thinnest fare,
 Like those I flatter'd, feed on air.

FABLE III

THE MOTHER, THE NURSE, AND THE FAIRY

GIVE me a son. The blessing sent,
 Were ever parents more content ?
 How partial are their doting eyes !
 No child is half so fair and wise.
 Waked to the morning's pleasing care, 5
 The Mother rose, and sought her heir.
 She saw the Nurse, like one possess'd,
 With wringing hands, and sobbing breast ;
 Sure some disaster hath befell :
 Speak, Nurse ; I hope the boy is well. 10
 Dear Madam, think not me to blame ;
 Invisible the Fairy came :
 Your precious babe is hence convey'd,
 And in the place a changeling laid.
 Where are the father's mouth and nose ? 15
 The mother's eyes as black as sloes ?

See here, a shocking awkward creature,
That speaks a fool in ev'ry feature.

The woman's blind, the Mother cries ;
I see wit sparkle in his eyes. 20

Lord ! madam, what a squinting leer !
No doubt the Fairy hath been here.

Just as she spoke, a pigmy sprite
Pops through the key-hole, swift as light ;
Perch'd on the cradle's top he stands, 25
And thus her folly reprimands :

Whence sprung the vain conceited lie,
That we the world with fools supply ?
What ! give our sprightly race away,
For the dull helpless sons of clay ! 30

Besides, by partial fondness shown,
Like you we dote upon our own.
Where yet was ever found a mother,
Who'd give her booby for another ?
And should we change with human breed, 35
Well might we pass for fools indeed.

FABLE IV

THE EAGLE AND THE ASSEMBLY OF ANIMALS

As Jupiter's all-seeing eye
Survey'd the worlds beneath the sky,
From this small speck of earth were sent
Murmurs and sounds of discontent ;
For ev'ry thing alive complain'd, 5
That he the hardest life sustain'd.

Jove calls his Eagle. At the word
 Before him stands the royal bird.
 The bird, obedient, from heav'n's height,
 Downward directs his rapid flight ; 10
 Then cited ev'ry living thing,
 To hear the mandates of his king.

Ungrateful creatures, whence arise
 These murmurs which offend the skies?
 Why this disorder? say the cause : 15
 For just are Jove's eternal laws.
 Let each his discontent reveal ;
 To yon sour Dog I first appeal.

Hard is my lot, the Hound replies,
 On what fleet nerves the Greyhound flies ! 20
 While I, with weary step and slow,
 O'er plains and vales, and mountains go.
 The morning sees my chase begun,
 Nor ends it till the setting sun.

When (says the Greyhound) I pursue, 25
 My game is lost, or caught in view ;
 Beyond my sight the prey's secure :
 The Hound is slow, but always sure.
 And had I his sagacious scent,
 Jove ne'er had heard my discontent. 30

The Lion craved the Fox's art ;
 The Fox, the Lion's force and heart.
 The Cock implored the Pigeon's flight,
 Whose wings were rapid, strong, and light :
 The Pigeon strength of wing despised, 35
 And the Cock's matchless valour prized :
 The Fishes wish'd to graze the plain ;
 The Beasts to skim beneath the main.

Thus, envious of another's state,
 Each blamed the partial hand of Fate. 40
 The bird of heav'n then cried aloud,
 Jove bids disperse the murm'ring crowd ;
 The God rejects your idle prayers.
 Would ye, rebellious mutineers,
 Entirely change your name and nature, 45
 And be the very envy'd creature ?
 What, silent all, and none consent !
 Be happy, then, and learn content ;
 Nor imitate the restless mind
 And proud ambition of mankind. 50

FABLE V

THE WILD BOAR AND THE RAM

AGAINST an elm a sheep was tied,
 The butcher's knife in blood was dyed ;
 The patient flock, in silent fright,
 From far beheld the horrid sight.
 A savage Boar, who near them stood, 5
 Thus mock'd to scorn the fleecy brood.
 All cowards should be served like you.
 See, see, your murd'rer is in view :
 With purple hands and reeking knife,
 He strips the skin yet warm with life. 10
 Your quarter'd sires, your bleeding dams,
 The dying bleat of harmless lambs,
 Call for revenge. O stupid race !
 The heart that wants revenge is base.

I grant, an ancient Ram replies, 15
 We bear no terror in our eyes ;
 Yet think us not of soul so tame,
 Which no repeated wrongs inflame ;
 Insensible of ev'ry ill,
 Because we want thy tusks to kill. 20
 Know, those who violence pursue,
 Give to themselves the vengeance due,
 For in these massacres they find
 The two chief plagues that waste mankind.
 Our skin supplies the wrangling bar ; 25
 It wakes their slumb'ring sons to war ;
 And well revenge may rest contented,
 Since drums and parchment were invented.

FABLE VI

THE MISER AND PLUTUS

THE wind was high, the window shakes ;
 With sudden start the Miser wakes ;
 Along the silent room he stalks ;
 Looks back, and trembles as he walks !
 Each lock and ev'ry bolt he tries, 5
 In ev'ry creek and corner pries,
 Then opes the chest with treasure stored,
 And stands in rapture o'er his hoard ;
 But now, with sudden qualms possest,
 He wrings his hands, he beats his breast. 10
 By conscience stung, he wildly stares,
 And thus his guilty soul declares :

Had the deep earth her stores confined,
 This heart had known sweet peace of mind.
 But virtue's sold. Good gods! what price 15
 Can recompense the pangs of vice!
 O bane of good! seducing cheat!
 Can man, weak man, thy power defeat?
 Gold banish'd honour from the mind,
 And only left the name behind; 20
 Gold sow'd the world with ev'ry ill;
 Gold taught the murd'rer's sword to kill:
 'Twas gold instructed coward hearts,
 In treachery's more pernicious arts.
 Who can recount the mischiefs o'er? 25
 Virtue resides on earth no more!

He spoke, and sigh'd. In angry mood,
 Plutus, his god, before him stood.
 The Miser trembling, lock'd his chest;
 The Vision frown'd, and thus addrest: 30
 Whence is this vile ungrateful rant?
 Each sordid rascal's daily cant.
 Did I, base wretch, corrupt mankind?
 The fault's in thy rapacious mind.
 Because my blessings are abused, 35
 Must I be censured, cursed, accused?
 Ev'n virtue's self by knaves is made
 A cloak to carry on the trade;
 And power (when lodged in their possession)
 Grows tyranny, and rank oppression. 40
 Thus, when the villain crams his chest,
 Gold is the canker of the breast;
 'Tis avarice, insolence, and pride,
 And every shocking vice beside.

But when to virtuous hands 'tis given, 45
 It blesses, like the dews of heav'n :
 Like heav'n, it hears the orphans' cries,
 And wipes the tears from widows' eyes ;
 Their crimes on gold shall misers lay,
 Who pawn'd their sordid souls for pay ? 50
 Let bravoës then (when blood is spilt)
 Upbraid the passive sword with guilt.

FABLE VII

THE LION, THE FOX, AND THE GEESE

A LION, tired with state affairs,
 Quite sick of pomp, and worn with cares,
 Resolved (remote from noise and strife)
 In peace to pass his latter life.
 It was proclaim'd ; the day was set ; 5
 Behold the gen'ral council met.
 The Fox was Viceroy named. The crowd
 To the new Regent humbly bow'd.
 Wolves, bears, and mighty tigers bend,
 And strive who most shall condescend. 10
 He straight assumes a solemn grace,
 Collects his wisdom in his face.
 The crowd admire his wit, his sense :
 Each word hath weight and consequence.
 The flatt'rer all his art displays : 15
 He who hath power, is sure of praise.
 A Fox stept forth before the rest,
 And thus the servile throng address :

How vast his talents, born to rule,
 And train'd in virtue's honest school ! 20
 What clemency his temper sways !
 How uncorrupt are all his ways !
 Beneath his conduct and command,
 Rapine shall cease to waste the land.
 His brain hath stratagem and art ; 25
 Prudence and mercy rule his heart.
 What blessings must attend the nation
 Under this good administration !
 He said. A Goose who distant stood,
 Harangued apart the cackling brood : 30
 Whene'er I hear a knave commend,
 He bids me shun his worthy friend.
 What praise ! what mighty commendation !
 But 'twas a Fox who spoke th' oration.
 Foxes this government may prize, 35
 As gentle, plentiful, and wise ;
 If they enjoy these sweets, 'tis plain
 We Geese must feel a tyrant reign.
 What havoc now shall thin our race,
 When ev'ry petty clerk in place, 40
 To prove his taste, and seem polite,
 Will feed on Geese both noon and night !

FABLE VIII

THE LADY AND THE WASP

WHAT whispers must the beauty bear !
 What hourly nonsense haunts her ear !

Where'er her eyes dispense their charms,
 Impertinence around her swarms.
 Did not the tender nonsense strike, 5
 Contempt and scorn might look dislike,
 Forbidding airs might thin the place,
 The slightest flap a fly can chase.
 But who can drive the num'rous breed?
 Chase one, another will succeed. 10
 Who knows a fool, must know his brother;
 One fop will recommend another:
 And with this plague she's rightly curst,
 Because she listen'd to the first.
 As Doris, at her toilet's duty, 15
 Sat meditating on her beauty,
 She now was pensive, now was gay,
 And loll'd the sultry hours away.
 As thus in indolence she lies,
 A giddy Wasp around her flies: 20
 He now advances, now retires,
 Now to her neck and cheek aspires.
 Her fan in vain defends her charms;
 Swift he returns, again alarms;
 For by repulse he bolder grew, 25
 Perch'd on her lip, and sipt the dew.
 She frowns, she frets. Good gods! she cries,
 Protect me from these teasing flies!
 Of all the plagues that heav'n hath sent,
 A Wasp is most impertinent. 30
 The hov'ring insect thus complain'd:
 Am I then slighted, scorn'd, disdain'd?
 Can such offence your anger wake?
 'Twas beauty caused the bold mistake,

Those cherry lips that breathe perfume, 35
 That cheek so ripe with youthful bloom,
 Made me with strong desire pursue
 The fairest peach that ever grew.

Strike him not, Jenny, Doris cries,
 Nor murder Wasps like vulgar flies : 40
 For though he 's free (to do him right),
 The creature 's civil and polite.

In ecstasies away he posts ;
 Where'er he came, the favour boasts ;
 Brags how her sweetest tea he sips, 45
 And shows the sugar on his lips.

The hint alarm'd the forward crew.
 Sure of success, away they flew.
 They share the dainties of the day,
 Round her with airy music play ; 50
 And now they flutter, now they rest,
 Now soar again, and skim her breast.
 Nor were they banish'd, till she found
 That Wasps have stings, and felt the wound.

FABLE IX

THE BULL AND THE MASTIFF

SEEK you to train your fav'rite boy?
 Each caution, ev'ry care employ ;
 And ere you venture to confide,
 Let his preceptor's heart be tried :
 Weigh well his manners, life, and scope ;
 On these depends thy future hope.

As on a time, in peaceful reign,
 A Bull enjoy'd the flowery plain,
 A Mastiff pass'd ; inflamed with ire,
 His eyeballs shot indignant fire ; 10
 He foam'd, he raged with thirst of blood.
 Spurning the ground the monarch stood,
 And roar'd aloud : Suspend the fight ;
 In a whole skin go sleep to-night ;
 Or tell me, ere the battle rage, 15
 What wrongs provoke thee to engage ?
 Is it ambition fires thy breast,
 Or avarice that ne'er can rest ?
 From these alone unjustly springs
 The world-destroying wrath of kings. 20

The surly Mastiff thus returns :
 Within my bosom glory burns.
 Like heroes of eternal name,
 Whom poets sing, I fight for fame.
 The butcher's spirit-stirring mind 25
 To daily war my youth inclined ;
 He train'd me to heroic deed,
 Taught me to conquer, or to bleed.

Cursed Dog, the Bull replied, no more
 I wonder at thy thirst of gore ; 30
 For thou (beneath a butcher train'd,
 Whose hands with cruelty are stain'd,
 His daily murders in thy view)
 Must, like thy tutor, blood pursue.
 Take then thy fate. With goring wound, 35
 At once he lifts him from the ground ;
 Aloft the sprawling hero flies,
 Mangled he falls, he howls, and dies.

FABLE X

THE ELEPHANT AND THE BOOKSELLER

THE man who with undaunted toils,
 Sails unknown seas to unknown soils,
 With various wonders feasts his sight :
 What stranger wonders does he write !
 We read, and in description view 5
 Creatures which Adam never knew ;
 For, when we risk no contradiction,
 It prompts the tongue to deal in fiction.
 Those things that startle me or you,
 I grant are strange ; yet may be true. 10
 Who doubts that Elephants are found
 For science and for sense renown'd ?
 Borri records their strength of parts,
 Extent of thought, and skill in arts ;
 How they perform the law's decrees, 15
 And save the state the hangman's fees ;
 And how by travel understand
 The language of another land.
 Let those, who question this report,
 To Pliny's ancient page resort. 20
 How learn'd was that sagacious breed !
 Who now (like them) the Greek can read !
 As one of these, in days of yore,
 Rummaged a shop of learning o'er ;
 Not, like our modern dealers, minding 25
 Only the margin's breadth and binding ;

A book his curious eye detains,
 Where, with exactest care and pains,
 Were ev'ry beast and bird portray'd,
 That e'er the search of man survey'd. 30
 Their natures and their powers were writ,
 With all the pride of human wit.
 The page he with attention spread,
 And thus remark'd on what he read :
 Man with strong reason is endow'd ; 35
 A beast scarce instinct is allow'd.
 But let this author's worth be tried,
 'Tis plain that neither was his guide.
 Can he discern the diff'rent natures,
 And weigh the power of other creatures, 40
 Who by the partial work hath shown
 He knows so little of his own ?
 How falsely is the spaniel drawn !
 Did man from him first learn to fawn ?
 A dog proficient in the trade ! 45
 He the chief flatt'rer nature made !
 Go, man, the ways of courts discern ;
 You'll find a spaniel still might learn.
 How can the fox's theft and plunder,
 Provoke his censure or his wonder ? 50
 From courtiers' tricks, and lawyers' arts,
 The fox might well improve his parts.
 The lion, wolf, and tiger's brood,
 He curses, for their thirst of blood :
 But is not man to man a prey ?
 Beasts kill for hunger, men for pay. 55
 The Bookseller, who heard him speak,
 And saw him turn a page of Greek,

Thought, what a genius have I found !
 Then thus address'd with bow profound :
 Learn'd Sir, if you'd employ your pen 60
 Against the senseless sofs of men,
 Or write the history of Siam,
 No man is better pay than I am ;
 Or, since you're learn'd in Greek, let 's see
 Something against the Trinity. 65

 When wrinkling with a sneer his trunk,
 Friend, quoth the Elephant, you're drunk ;
 E'en keep your money, and be wise :
 Leave man on man to criticise ;
 For that you ne'er can want a pen 70
 Among the senseless sons of men.
 They unprovoked will court the fray :
 Envy's a sharper spur than pay.
 No author ever spared a brother ;
 Wits are gamecocks to one another. 75

FABLE XI

THE PEACOCK, THE TURKEY, AND GOOSE

IN beauty faults conspicuous grow ;
 The smallest speck is seen on snow.
 As near a barn, by hunger led,
 A Peacock with the poultry fed ;
 All view'd him with an envious eye, 5
 And mock'd his gaudy pageantry.
 He, conscious of superior merit,
 Contemns their base reviling spirit ;

His state and dignity assumes,
 And to the sun displays his plumes ; 10
 Which, like the heav'ns o'er-arching skies,
 Are spangled with a thousand eyes.
 The circling rays, and varied light,
 At once confound their dazzled sight ;
 On ev'ry tongue detraction burns, 15
 And malice prompts their spleen by turns.

Mark with what insolence and pride,
 The creature takes his haughty stride !
 The Turkey cries. Can spleen contain ?
 Sure never bird was half so vain ! 20
 But, were intrinsic merit seen,
 We turkeys have the whiter skin.

From tongue to tongue they caught abuse ;
 And next was heard the hissing Goose.
 What hideous legs ! what filthy claws ! 25
 I scorn to censure little flaws !
 Then what a horrid squalling throat !
 Ev'n owls are frighted at the note.

True. Those are faults, the Peacock cries ;
 My scream, my shanks you may despise ; 30
 But such blind critics rail in vain.
 What, overlook my radiant train !
 Know, did my legs (your scorn and sport)
 The Turkey or the Goose support,
 And did ye scream with harsher sound, 35
 Those faults in you had ne'er been found ?
 To all apparent beauties blind,
 Each blemish strikes an envious mind.

Thus in assemblies have I seen
 A nymph of brightest charms and mien, 40

Wake envy in each ugly face,
And buzzing scandal fills the place.

FABLE XII

CUPID, HYMEN, AND PLUTUS

As Cupid in Cythera's grove
Employ'd the lesser powers of love ;
Some shape the bow, or fit the string ;
Some give the taper shaft its wing,
Or turn the polish'd quiver's mould, 5
Or head the darts with temper'd gold.

Amidst their toil and various care,
Thus Hymen, with assuming air,
Address'd the god : Thou purblind chit,
Of awkward and ill-judging wit, 10
If matches are no better made,
At once I must forswear my trade.

You send me such ill-coupled folks,
That 'tis a shame to sell them yokes.
They squabble for a pin, a feather, 15
And wonder how they came together.

The husband 's sullen, dogged, shy,
The wife grows flippant in reply :
He loves command and due restriction,
And she as well likes contradiction : 20

She never slavishly submits ;
She'll have her will, or have her fits.
He this way tugs, she t' other draws ;
The man grows jealous, and with cause.

Nothing can save him but divorce ; 25
 And here the wife complies of course.

When, says the Boy, had I to do
 With either your affairs or you ?
 I never idly spent my darts ;
 You trade in mercenary hearts. 30
 For settlements the lawyer 's fee'd ;
 Is my hand witness to the deed ?
 If they like cat and dog agree,
 Go rail at Plutus, not at me.

Plutus appear'd, and said : 'Tis true, 35
 In marriage, gold is all their view ;
 They seek not beauty, wit, or sense,
 And love is seldom the pretence.

All offer incense at my shrine,
 And I alone the bargain sign. 40
 How can Belinda blame her fate ?
 She only ask'd a great estate.

Doris was rich enough, 'tis true ;
 Her lord must give her title too :
 And ev'ry man, or rich or poor, 45
 A fortune asks, and asks no more.

Av'rice, whatever shape it bears,
 Must still be coupled with its cares.

FABLE XIII

THE TAME STAG

As a young Stag the thicket past,
 The branches held his antlers fast ;

A clown, who saw the captive hung,
Across the horns his halter flung.

Now safely hamper'd in the cord, 5
He bore the present to his lord.

His lord was pleased ; as was the clown,
When he was tipt with half-a-crown.

The Stag was brought before his wife ;
The tender lady begg'd his life. 10

How sleek 's the skin ! how speck'd like ermine !
Sure never creature was so charming !

At first within the yard confined,
He flies and hides from all mankind ;

Now bolder grown, with fixt amaze, 15
And distant awe, presumes to gaze ;

Munches the linen on the lines,
And on a hood or apron dines :

He steals my little master's bread,
Follows the servants to be fed : 20

Nearer and nearer now he stands,
To feel the praise of patting hands ;

Examines ev'ry fist for meat,
And, though repulsed, disdains retreat ;

Attacks again with levell'd horns, 25
And man, that was his terror, scorns.

Such is the country maiden's fright,
When first a red-coat is in sight ;

Behind the door she hides her face ;
Next time at distance eyes the lace ; 30

She now can all his terrors stand,
Nor from his squeeze withdraws her hand.

She plays familiar in his arms,
And ev'ry soldier hath his charms.

From tent to tent she spreads her flame ; 35
 For custom conquers fear and shame.

FABLE XIV

THE MONKEY WHO HAD SEEN THE WORLD

A MONKEY, to reform the times,
 Resolved to visit foreign climes :
 For men in distant regions roam
 To bring politer manners home.
 So forth he fares, all toil defies : 5
 Misfortune serves to make us wise.

At length the treach'rous snare was laid ;
 Poor Pug was caught, to town convey'd,
 There sold. 'How envied was his doom,
 Made captive in a lady's room !' 10
 Proud as a lover of his chains,
 He day by day her favour gains.
 Whene'er the duty of the day,
 The toilet calls, with mimic play
 He twirls her knots, he cracks her fan, 15
 Like any other gentleman.
 In visits, too, his parts and wit,
 When jests grew dull, were sure to hit.
 Proud with applause, he thought his mind
 In ev'ry courtly art refined ; 20
 Like Orpheus burn'd with public zeal
 To civilise the monkey weal :
 So watch'd occasion, broke his chain,
 And sought his native woods again.

The hairy sylvans round him press, 25
 Astonish'd at his strut and dress.
 Some praise his sleeve ; and others gloat
 Upon his rich embroider'd coat ;
 His dapper periwig commending,
 With the black tail behind depending ; 30
 His powder'd back, above, below,
 Like hoary frost, or fleecy snow ;
 But all, with envy and desire,
 His flutt'ring shoulder-knot admire.
 Hear and improve, he pertly cries ; 35
 I come to make a nation wise.
 Weigh your own words ; support your place
 The next in rank to human race.
 In cities long I pass'd my days,
 Convers'd with men, and learnt their ways. 40
 Their dress, their courtly manners see ;
 Reform your state and copy me.
 Seek ye to thrive ? In flatt'ry deal ;
 Your scorn your hate, with that conceal.
 Seem only to regard your friends, 45
 But use them for your private ends.
 Stint not to truth the flow of wit ;
 Be prompt to lie whene'er 'tis fit.
 Bend all your force to spatter merit ;
 Scandal is conversation's spirit. 50
 Boldly to ev'ry thing pretend,
 And men your talents shall commend.
 I knew the Great. Observe me right ;
 So shall you grow like man polite.
 He spoke and bow'd. With mutt'ring jaws 55
 The wond'ring circle grinn'd applause.

Now, warm with malice, envy, spite,
 Their most obliging friends they bite ;
 And fond to copy human ways,
 Practise new mischiefs all their days. 60

Thus the dull lad, too tall for school,
 With travel finishes the fool ;
 Studious of ev'ry coxcomb's airs,
 He drinks, games, dresses, whores, and swears ;
 O'erlooks with scorn all virtuous arts, 65
 For vice is fitted to his parts.

FABLE XV

THE PHILOSOPHER AND THE PHEASANT

THE Sage, awaked at early day,
 Through the deep forest took his way ;
 Drawn by the music of the groves,
 Along the winding gloom he roves :
 From tree to tree, the warbling throats 5
 Prolong the sweet alternate notes.
 But where he past, he terror threw,
 The song broke short, the warblers flew ;
 The thrushes chatter'd with affright,
 And nightingales abhorr'd his sight ; 10
 All animals before him ran,
 To shun the hateful sight of man.

Whence is this dread of ev'ry creature ?
 Fly they our figure or our nature ?

As thus he walk'd in musing thought 15
 His ear imperfect accents caught ;

With cautious step he nearer drew,
By the thick shade conceal'd from view.
High on the branch a Pheasant stood,
Around her all her list'ning brood ; 20
Proud of the blessings of her nest,
She thus a mother's care express'd :
 No dangers here shall circumvent,
Within the woods enjoy content,
Sooner the hawk or vulture trust, 25
Than man, of animals the worst.
In him ingratitude you find,
A vice peculiar to the kind.
The sheep whose annual fleece is dyed,
To guard his health, and serve his pride, 30
Forced from his fold and native plain,
Is in the cruel shambles slain.
The swarms, who, with industrious skill,
His hives with wax and honey fill,
In vain whole summer days employ'd, 35
Their stores are sold, their race destroy'd.
What tribute from the goose is paid !
Does not her wing all science aid !
Does it not lovers' hearts explain,
And drudge to raise the merchant's gain ? 40
What now rewards this general use ?
He takes the quills, and eats the goose.
Man then avoid, detest his ways ;
So safety shall prolong your days.
When services are thus acquitted, 45
Be sure we Pheasants must be spitted.

FABLE XVI

THE PIN AND THE NEEDLE

A PIN, who long had served a Beauty,
 Proficient in the toilet's duty,
 Had form'd her sleeve, confined her hair,
 Or giv'n her knot a smarter air,
 Now nearest to her heart was placed, 5
 Now in her manteau's tail disgraced :
 But could she partial fortune blame,
 Who saw her lovers served the same ?

At length from all her honours cast,
 Through various turns of life she past ; 10
 Now glitter'd on a tailor's arm ;
 Now kept a beggar's infant warm ;
 Now, ranged within a miser's coat,
 Contributes to his yearly groat ;
 Now, raised again from low approach,
 She visits in the doctor's coach ;
 Here, there, by various fortune tost,
 At last in Gresham Hall was lost.

Charm'd with the wonders of the show,
 On every side, above, below, 20
 She now of this or that inquires,
 What least was understood admires.
 'Tis plain, each thing so struck her mind,
 Her head's of virtuoso kind.

And pray what's this, and this, dear sir ? 25
 A Needle, says the interpreter.
 She knew the name. And thus the fool
 Address'd her as a tailor's tool :

A Needle with that filthy stone,
 Quite idle, all with rust o'ergrown ! 30
 You better might employ your parts,
 And aid the sempstress in her arts.
 But tell me how the friendship grew
 Between that paltry flint and you ?
 Friend, says the Needle, cease to blame ; 35
 I follow real worth and fame.
 Know'st thou the loadstone's power and art,
 That virtue virtues can impart ?
 Of all his talents I partake,
 Who then can such a friend forsake ? 40
 'Tis I direct the pilot's hand
 To shun the rocks and treach'rous sand ;
 By me the distant world is known,
 And either India is our own.
 Had I with milliners been bred, 45
 What had I been ? the guide of thread ;
 And drudged as vulgar Needles do,
 Of no more consequence than you.

FABLE XVII

THE SHEPHERD'S DOG AND THE WOLF

A WOLF, with hunger fierce and bold,
 Ravaged the plains, and thinn'd the fold ;
 Deep in the wood secure he lay,
 The thefts of night regaled the day.
 In vain the shepherd's wakeful care 5
 Had spread the toils, and watch'd the snare ;

In vain the dog pursued his pace,
The fleeter robber mock'd the chase.

As Lightfoot ranged the forest round,
By chance his foe's retreat he found. 10

Let us awhile the war suspend,
And reason as from friend to friend.

A truce? replies the Wolf. 'Tis done.
The Dog the parley thus begun :

How can that strong intrepid mind 15
Attack a weak defenceless kind ?

Those jaws should prey on nobler food,
And drink the boar's and lion's blood,
Great souls with generous pity melt,
Which coward tyrants never felt. 20

How harmless is our fleecy care !
Be brave, and let thy mercy spare.

Friend, says the Wolf, the matter weigh ;
Nature design'd us beasts of prey ;
As such, when hunger finds a treat, 25
'Tis necessary Wolves should eat.

If, mindful of the bleating weal,
Thy bosom burn with real zeal ;
Hence, and thy tyrant lord beseech ;
To him repeat the moving speech : 30

A Wolf eats sheep but now and then,
Ten thousands are devour'd by men.

An open foe may prove a curse,
But a pretended friend is worse.

FABLE XVIII

THE PAINTER WHO PLEAS'D NOBODY
AND EVERYBODY

LEST men suspect your tale untrue,
 Keep probability in view.
 The trav'ler leaping o'er those bounds,
 The credit of his book confounds.
 Who with his tongue hath armies routed,
 Makes ev'n his real courage doubted.
 But flatt'ry never seems absurd ;
 The flatter'd always takes your word :
 Impossibilities seem just ;
 They take the strongest praise on trust. 10
 Hyperboles, tho' ne'er so great,
 Will still come short of self-conceit.

So very like a Painter drew,
 That ev'ry eye the picture knew ;
 He hit complexion, feature, air, 15
 So just, the life itself was there.
 No flatt'ry, with his colours laid,
 To bloom restored the faded maid ;
 He gave each muscle all its strength ;
 The mouth, the chin, the nose's length 20
 His honest pencil touch'd with truth,
 And mark'd the date of age and youth.

He lost his friends, his practice fail'd ;
 Truth should not always be reveal'd ;
 In dusty piles his pictures lay, 25
 For no one sent the second pay.

Two bustos, fraught with every grace,
 A Venus' and Apollo's face,
 He placed in view ; resolved to please,
 Whoever sat, he drew from these ; 30
 From these corrected every feature,
 And spirited each awkward creature.

All things were set ; the hour was come,
 His pallet ready o'er his thumb,
 My Lord appear'd ; and seated right 35
 In proper attitude and light,
 The painter look'd, he sketch'd the piece,
 Then dipt his pencil, talk'd of Greece,
 Of Titian's tints, of Guido's air ;
 Those eyes, my Lord, the spirit there 40
 Might well a Raphael's hand require,
 To give them all the native fire ;
 The features, fraught with sense and wit,
 You 'll grant are very hard to hit ;
 But yet with patience you shall view 45
 As much as paint and art can do.

Observe the work. My Lord replied,
 Till now I thought my mouth was wide ;
 Besides, my nose is somewhat long ;
 Dear sir, for me, 'tis far too young. 50

Oh ! pardon me, the artist cried,
 In this we painters must decide.
 The piece ev'n common eyes must strike,
 I warrant it extremely like.

My Lord examined it anew ; 55
 No looking-glass seem'd half so true.

A lady came, with borrow'd grace
 He from his Venus form'd her face.

Her lover praised the painter's art ;
 So like the picture in his heart ! 60
 To ev'ry age some charm he lent ;
 Ev'n beauties were almost content.

Through all the town his art they praised ;
 His custom grew, his price was raised.
 Had he the real likeness shown, 65
 Would any man the picture own ?
 But when thus happily he wrought,
 Each found the likeness in his thought.

FABLE XIX

THE LION AND THE CUB

How fond are men of rule and place,
 Who court it from the mean and base !
 These cannot bear an equal nigh,
 But from superior merit fly.
 They love the cellar's vulgar joke, 5
 And lose their hours in ale and smoke.
 There o'er some petty club preside ;
 So poor, so paltry is their pride !
 Nay, ev'n with fools whole nights will sit,
 In hopes to be supreme in wit. 10
 If these can read, to these I write,
 To set their worth in truest light.

A Lion-cub of sordid mind,
 Avoided all the lion kind ;
 Fond of applause, he sought the feasts 15
 Of vulgar and ignoble beasts ;

With asses all his time he spent,
 Their club's perpetual president.
 He caught their manners, looks, and airs ;
 An ass in everything but ears ! 20
 If e'er his highness meant a joke,
 They grinn'd applause before he spoke ;
 But at each word what shouts of praise !
 Good gods ! how natural he brays !
 Elate with flatt'ry and conceit, 25
 He seeks his royal sire's retreat ;
 Forward, and fond to show his parts,
 His highness brays ; the Lion starts.
 Puppy, that cursed vociferation
 Betrays thy life and conversation : 30
 Coxcombs, an ever-noisy race,
 Are trumpets of their own disgrace.
 Why so severe ? the Cub replies ;
 Our senate always held me wise.
 How weak is pride ! returns the sire ; 35
 All fools are vain, when fools admire !
 But know, what stupid asses prize,
 Lions and noble beasts despise.

FABLE XX

THE OLD HEN AND THE COCK

RESTRAIN your child ; you 'll soon believe
 The text which says we sprung from Eve.
 As an Old Hen led forth her train,
 And seem'd to peck to show the grain ;

She raked the chaff, she scratch'd the ground, 5
And glean'd the spacious yard around.
A giddy chick, to try her wings,
On the well's narrow margin springs,
And prone she drops. The mother's breast
All day with sorrow was possess'd. 10

A Cock she met : her son, she knew ;
And in her heart affection grew.

My son, says she, I grant your years
Have reach'd beyond a mother's cares ;
I see you vig'rous, strong, and bold ; 15
I hear with joy your triumphs told.

'Tis not from Cocks thy fate I dread ;
But let thy ever-wary tread
Avoid yon well ; that fatal place
Is sure perdition to our race. 20

Print this my counsel on thy breast :
To the just gods I leave the rest.

He thank'd her care ; yet day by day
His bosom burn'd to disobey ;
And ev'ry time the well he saw, 25
Scorn'd in his heart the foolish law ;
Near and more near each day he drew,
And long'd to try the dang'rous view.

Why was this idle charge ? he cries,
Let courage female fears despise. 30

Or did she doubt my heart was brave,
And therefore this injunction gave ?
Or does her harvest store the place,
A treasure for her younger race ?
And would she thus my search prevent ? 35
I stand resolved, and dare th' event.

Thus said. He mounts the margin's round,
 And pries into the depth profound.
 He stretch'd his neck ; and from below
 With stretching neck advanced a foe : 40
 With wrath his ruffled plumes he rears,
 The foe with ruffled plumes appears.
 Threat answer'd threat, his fury grew,
 Headlong to meet the war he flew,
 But when the wat'ry death he found, 45
 He thus lamented as he drown'd :
 I ne'er had been in this condition,
 But for my mother's prohibition.

FABLE XXI

THE RAT-CATCHER AND CATS

THE rats by night such mischief did,
 Betty was ev'ry morning chid.
 They undermined whole sides of bacon,
 Her cheese was sapp'd, her tarts were taken.
 Her pasties, fenced with thickest paste, 5
 Were all demolish'd, and laid waste.
 She cursed the Cat for want of duty,
 Who left her foes a constant booty.
 An engineer, of noted skill,
 Engaged to stop the growing ill. 10
 From room to room he now surveys
 Their haunts, their works, their secret ways ;
 Finds where they 'scape an ambuscade,
 And whence the nightly sally's made.

An envious Cat from place to place, 15
Unseen, attends his silent pace.

She saw that if his trade went on,
The purring race must be undone ;
So, secretly removes his baits,
And ev'ry stratagem defeats. 20

Again he sets the poison'd toils,
And Puss again the labour foils.

What foe (to frustrate my designs)
My schemes thus nightly countermines ?
Incensed, he cries, this very hour 25
The wretch shall bleed beneath my power.

So said, a pond'rous trap he brought,
And in the fact poor Puss was caught.

Smuggler, says he, thou shalt be made
A victim to our loss of trade. 30

The captive Cat, with piteous mews,
For pardon, life, and freedom sues.

A sister of the science spare ;
One int'rest is our common care.

What insolence! the man replied ; 35
Shall Cats with us the game divide?

Were all your interloping band
Extinguish'd, or expell'd the land,
We Rat-catchers might raise our fees,
Sole guardians of a nation's cheese ! 40

A Cat, who saw the lifted knife,
Thus spoke, and saved her sister's life :

In ev'ry age and clime we see,
Two of a trade can ne'er agree.
Each hates his neighbour for encroaching ; 45
'Squire stigmatizes 'squire for poaching ;

Beauties with beauties are in arms,
 And scandal pelts each other's charms ;
 Kings, too, their neighbour kings dethrone,
 In hope to make the world their own. 50
 But let us limit our desires,
 Not war like beauties, kings, and 'squires !
 For though we both one prey pursue,
 There 's game enough for us and you.

FABLE XXII

THE GOAT WITHOUT A BEARD

'TIS certain, that the modish passions
 Descend among the crowd, like fashions.
 Excuse me, then, if pride, conceit,
 (The manners of the fair and great)
 I give to monkeys, asses, dogs, 5
 Fleas, owls, goats, butterflies, and hogs.
 I say that these are proud. What then ?
 I never said they equal men !
 A Goat (as vain as Goat can be)
 Affected singularity. 10
 Whene'er a thymy bank he found,
 He roll'd upon the fragrant ground,
 And then with fond attention stood,
 Fix'd o'er his image in the flood.
 I hate my frowsy beard, he cries, 15
 My youth is lost in this disguise.
 Did not the females know my vigour,
 Well might they loath this rev'rend figure.

Resolved to smooth his shaggy face
 He sought the barber of the place 20
 A flippant monkey, spruce and smart,
 Hard by, profess'd the dapper art :
 His pole, with pewter basins hung,
 Black rotten teeth in order strung,
 Ranged cups that in the window stood, 25
 Lined with red rags to look like blood,
 Did well his threefold trade explain,
 Who shaved, drew teeth, and breathed a vein.

The Goat he welcomes with an air,
 And seats him in his wooden chair : 30
 Mouth, nose, and cheek, the lather hides ;
 Light, smooth, and swift, the razor glides.

I hope your custom, Sir, says Pug.
 Sure never face was half so smug.

The Goat, impatient for applause, 35
 Swift to the neighbouring hill withdraws ;
 The shaggy people grinn'd and stared.

Heighday ! what 's here ? without a beard !
 Say, brother, whence the dire disgrace ?
 What envious hand hath robb'd your face ? 40

When thus the fop with smiles of scorn :
 Are beards by civil nations worn ?
 Ev'n Muscovites have mow'd their chins.
 Shall we, like formal Capuchins,
 Stubborn in pride, retain the mode, 45
 And bear about the hairy load ?
 Whene'er we through the village stray,
 Are we not mock'd along the way,
 Insulted with loud shouts of scorn,
 By boys our beards disgraced and torn ? 50

Were you no more with goats to dwell,
 Brother, I grant you reason well,
 Replies a bearded chief. Beside,
 If boys can mortify thy pride,
 How wilt thou stand the ridicule 55
 Of our whole flock? affected fool!
 Coxcombs, distinguish'd from the rest,
 To all but coxcombs are a jest.

FABLE XXIII

THE OLD WOMAN AND HER CATS

WHO friendship with a knave hath made,
 Is judged a partner in the trade.
 The matron, who conducts abroad
 A willing nymph, is thought a bawd;
 And if a modest girl is seen 5
 With one who cures a lover's spleen,
 We guess her, not extremely nice,
 And only wish to know her price.
 'Tis thus that on the choice of friends
 Our good or evil name depends. 10
 A wrinkled Hag, of wicked fame,
 Beside a little smoky flame
 Sat hov'ring, pinch'd with age and frost;
 Her shrivell'd hands, with veins emboss'd,
 Upon her knees her weight sustains, 15
 While palsy shook her crazy brains:
 She mumbles forth her backward prayers,
 An untamed scold of fourscore years.

About her swarm'd a num'rous brood
Of Cats, who lank with hunger mew'd. 20

Teased with their cries, her choler grew,
And thus she sputter'd : Hence, ye crew !

Fool that I was, to entertain
Such imps, such fiends, a hellish train !

Had ye been never housed and nursed, 25
I, for a witch, had ne'er been cursed.

To you I owe, that crowds of boys
Worry me with eternal noise ;

Straws laid across, my pace retard ;
The horse-shoe's nail'd (each threshold's

guard); 30

The stunted broom the wenches hide,

For fear that I should up and ride ;

They stick with pins my bleeding seat,

And bid me show my secret teat.

To hear you prate would vex a saint ; 35

Who hath most reason of complaint ?

Replies a Cat. Let 's come to proof.

Had we ne'er starved beneath your roof,

We had, like others of our race,

In credit lived, as beasts of chase. 40

'Tis infamy to serve a Hag ;

Cats are thought imps, her broom a nag ;

And boys against our lives combine,

Because, 'tis said, your cats have nine.

FABLE XXIV

THE BUTTERFLY AND THE SNAIL

ALL upstarts insolent in place,
 Remind us of their vulgar race.
 As, in the sunshine of the morn,
 A Butterfly (but newly born)
 Sat proudly perking on a rose, 5
 With pert conceit his bosom glows ;
 His wings (all-glorious to behold)
 Bedropt with azure, jet, and gold,
 Wide he displays ; the spangled dew
 Reflects his eyes, and various hue. 10
 His now-forgotten friend a Snail,
 Beneath his house, with slimy trail
 Crawls o'er the grass ; whom when he spies,
 In wrath he to the gard'ners cries :
 What means yon peasant's daily toil, 15
 From choking weeds to rid the soil ?
 Why wake you to the morning's care ?
 Why with new arts correct the year ?
 Why glows the peach with crimson hue ?
 And why the plums inviting blue ? 20
 Were they to feast his taste design'd,
 That vermin of voracious kind ?
 Crush then the slow, the pilf'ring race ;
 So purge thy garden from disgrace
 What arrogance ! the Snail replied ; 25
 How insolent is upstart pride !

Hadst thou not thus with insult vain,
 Provoked my patience to complain,
 I had conceal'd thy meaner birth,
 Nor traced thee to the scum of earth. 30
 For scarce nine suns have waked the hours,
 To swell the fruit, and paint the flowers,
 Since I thy humbler life survey'd.
 In base, in sordid guise array'd ;
 A hideous insect, vile, unclean, 35
 You dragg'd a slow and noisome train ;
 And from your spider-bowels drew
 Foul film, and spun the dirty clue.
 I own my humble life, good friend ;
 Snail was I born, and Snail shall end. 40
 And what 's a Butterfly? At best,
 He 's but a caterpillar, drest ;
 And all thy race (a numerous seed)
 Shall prove of caterpillar breed.

FABLE XXV

THE SCOLD AND THE PARROT

THE husband thus reproved his wife :
 Who deals in slander, lives in strife.
 Art thou the herald of disgrace,
 Denouncing war to all thy race?
 Can nothing quell thy thunder's rage, . 5
 Which spares nor friend, nor sex, nor age?
 That vixen tongue of yours, my dear,
 Alarms our neighbours far and near.

Good gods ! 'tis like a rolling river,
 That murm'ring flows, and flows for ever ! 10
 Ne'er tired, perpetual discord sowing !
 Like fame, it gathers strength by going.

Heighday ! the flippant tongue replies,
 How solemn is the fool, how wise !
 Is nature's choicest gift debarr'd ? 15
 Nay, frown not ; for I will be heard.
 Women of late are finely ridden,
 A Parrot's privilege forbidden !
 You praise his talk, his squalling song ;
 But wives are always in the wrong. 20

Now reputations flew in pieces
 Of mothers, daughters, aunts, and nieces.
 She ran the Parrot's language o'er,
 Bawd, hussy, drunkard, slattern, whore ;
 On all the sex she vents her fury, 25
 Tries and condemns without a jury.

At once the torrent of her words
 Alarm'd cat, monkey, dogs, and birds :
 All join their forces to confound her ;
 Puss spits, the monkey chatters round her ; 30
 The yelping cur her heels assaults ;
 The magpie blabs out all her faults ;
 Poll, in the uproar, from his cage,
 With this rebuke out-scream'd her rage :

A Parrot is for talking prized, 35
 But prattling women are despised.
 She who attacks another's honour,
 Draws every living thing upon her.
 Think; madam, when you stretch your lungs,
 That all your neighbours too have tongues. 40

One slander must ten thousand get,
The world with int'rest pays the debt.

FABLE XXVI

THE CUR AND THE MASTIFF

A SNEAKING Cur, the master's spy,
Rewarded for his daily lie,
With secret jealousies and fears
Set altogether by the ears.
Poor Puss to-day was in disgrace, 5
Another cat supplied her place ;
The hound was beat, the Mastiff chid,
The monkey was the room forbid ;
Each to his dearest friend grew shy,
And none could tell the reason why. 10
A plan to rob the house was laid,
The thief with love seduced the maid ;
Cajoled the Cur, and stroked his head,
And bought his secrecy with bread.
He next the Mastiff's honour tried, 15
Whose honest jaws the bribe defied.
He stretch'd his hand to proffer more :
The surly dog his fingers tore.
Swift ran the Cur ; with indignation
The master took his information. 20
Hang him, the villain's cursed, he cries ;
And round his neck the halter ties.
The Dog his humble suit preferr'd,
And begg'd in justice to be heard.

The master sat. On either hand 25
 The cited dogs confronting stand ;
 The Cur the bloody tale relates,
 And, like a lawyer, aggravates.
 Judge not unheard, the Mastiff cried,
 But weigh the cause of either side. 30
 Think not that treach'ry can be just,
 Take not informers' words on trust.
 They ope their hand to ev'ry pay,
 And you and me by turns betray.
 He spoke. And all the truth appear'd. 35
 The Cur was hang'd, the Mastiff clear'd.

FABLE XXVII

THE SICK MAN AND THE ANGEL

Is there no hope? the Sick Man said.
 The silent doctor shook his head,
 And took his leave with signs of sorrow,
 Despairing of his fee to-morrow.
 When thus the Man with gasping breath : 5
 I feel the chilling wound of death :
 Since I must bid the world adieu,
 Let me my former life review.
 I grant, my bargains well were made,
 But all men overreach in trade ; 10
 'Tis self-defence in each profession,
 Sure self-defence is no transgression.
 The little portion in my hands,
 By good security on lands,

Is well increased. If unawares, 15
 My justice to myself and heirs,
 Hath let my debtor rot in jail,
 For want of good sufficient bail ;
 If I by writ, or bond, or deed,
 Reduced a family to need, 20
 My will hath made the world amends ;
 My hope on charity depends.
 When I am number'd with the dead,
 And all my pious gifts are read,
 By heav'n and earth 'twill then be known, 25
 My charities were amply shown.

An Angel came. Ah, friend ! he cried,
 No more in flatt'ring hope confide.
 Can thy good deeds in former times
 Outweigh the balance of thy crimes ? 30
 What widow or what orphan prays
 To crown thy life with length of days ?
 A pious action's in thy power ;
 Embrace with joy the happy hour.
 Now, while you draw the vital air, 35
 Prove your intention is sincere.
 This instant give a hundred pound ;
 Your neighbours want, and you abound.

But why such haste, the Sick Man whines ;
 Who knows as yet what heav'n designs ? 40
 Perhaps I may recover still ;
 That sum and more are in my will.

Fool, says the Vision, now 'tis plain,
 Your life, your soul, your heav'n was gain ;
 From every side, with all your might, 45
 You scraped, and scraped beyond your right ;

And after death would fain atone,
By giving what is not your own.

Where there is life, there 's hope, he cried ;
Then why such haste ? so groan'd and died. 50

FABLE XXVIII

THE PERSIAN, THE SUN, AND THE CLOUD.

Is there a bard whom genius fires,
Whose ev'ry thought the God inspires ?
When Envy reads the nervous lines,
She frets, she rails, she raves, she pines ;
Her hissing snakes with venom swell ; 5
She calls her venal train from hell :

The servile fiends her nod obey,
And all Curl's authors are in pay.
Fame calls up calumny and spite.
Thus shadow owes its birth to light. 10

As prostrate to the God of Day,
With heart devout, a Persian lay,
His invocation thus begun :

Parent of light, all-seeing Sun,
Prolific beam, whose rays dispense 15
The various gifts of Providence ;
Accept our praise, our daily prayer,
Smile on our fields, and bless the year.

A Cloud, who mock'd his grateful tongue,
The day with sudden darkness hung ; 20
With pride and envy swell'd, aloud
A voice thus thunder'd from the Cloud :

Weak is this gaudy god of thine,
Whom I at will forbid to shine.
Shall I nor vows nor incense know? 25

Where praise is due, the praise bestow.

With fervent zeal the Persian moved,
Thus the proud calumny reprov'd :

It was that God, who claims my prayer,
Who gave thee birth, and raised thee there ; 30
When o'er his beams the veil is thrown,
Thy substance is but plainer shown.

A passing gale, a puff of wind,
Dispels thy thickest troops combined.

The gale arose ; the vapour tost 35
(The sport of winds) in air was lost ;
The glorious orb the day refines.
Thus envy breaks, thus merit shines.

FABLE XXIX

THE FOX AT THE POINT OF DEATH

A FOX, in life's extreme decay,
Weak, sick, and faint, expiring lay ;
All appetite had left his maw,
And age disarm'd his mumbling jaw.
His num'rous race around him stand 5
To learn their dying sire's command :
He raised his head with whining moan,
And thus was heard the feeble tone :
Ah, sons ! from evil ways depart ;
My crimes lie heavy on my heart. 10

See, see, the murder'd geese appear !
 Why are those bleeding turkeys there ?
 Why all around this cackling train,
 Who haunt my ears for chicken slain ?
 The hungry foxes round them stared, 15
 And for the promised feast prepared.
 Where, Sir, is all this dainty cheer ?
 Nor turkey, goose, nor hen is here.
 These are the phantoms of your brain,
 And your sons lick their lips in vain. 20
 O gluttons ! says the drooping sire,
 Restrain inordinate desire.
 Your liqu'rish taste you shall deplore,
 When peace of conscience is no more.
 Does not the hound betray our pace, 25
 And gins and guns destroy our race ?
 Thieves dread the searching eye of power,
 And never feel the quiet hour.
 Old age (which few of us shall know)
 Now puts a period to my woe. 30
 Would you true happiness attain,
 Let honesty your passions rein ;
 So live in credit and esteem,
 And the good name you lost, redeem.
 The counsel's good, a Fox replies, 35
 Could we perform what you advise.
 Think what our ancestors have done ;
 A line of thieves from son to son :
 To us descends the long disgrace,
 And infamy hath mark'd our race. 40
 Though we, like harmless sheep, should feed,
 Honest in thought, in word, and deed,

Whatever hen-roost is decreased,
 We shall be thought to share the feast.
 The change shall never be believed. 45
 A lost good name is ne'er retrieved.
 Nay then, replies the feeble Fox,
 (But hark ! I hear a Hen that clocks)
 Go, but be mod'rate in your food ;
 A Chicken too might do me good. 50

FABLE XXX

THE SETTING-DOG AND THE PARTRIDGE

THE ranging Dog the stubble tries,
 And searches ev'ry breeze that flies ;
 The scent grows warm ; with cautious fear
 He creeps, and points the covey near ;
 The men, in silence, far behind, 5
 Conscious of game, the net unbind.
 A Partridge, with experience wise,
 The fraudulent preparation spies :
 She mocks their toils, alarms her brood ;
 The covey springs, and seeks the wood ; 10
 But ere her certain wing she tries,
 Thus to the creeping spaniel cries :
 Thou fawning slave to man's deceit,
 Thou pimp of lux'ry, sneaking cheat,
 Of thy whole species thou disgrace, 15
 Dogs should disown thee of their race !
 For if I judge their native parts,
 They're born with honest open hearts ;

And, ere they served man's wicked ends,
Were gen'rous foes, or real friends. 20

When thus the Dog with scornful smile :
Secure of wing, thou dar'st revile.
Clowns are to polish'd manners blind,
How ign'rant is the rustic mind !
My worth sagacious courtiers see, 25
And to preferment rise, like me,
The thriving pimp, who beauty sets,
Hath oft enhanced a nation's debts :
Friend sets his friend, without regard ;
And ministers his skill reward : 30
Thus train'd by man, I learnt his ways,
And growing favour feasts my days.

I might have guess'd, the Partridge said,
The place where you were train'd and fed ;
Servants are apt, and in a trice 35
Ape to a hair their master's vice.
You came from court, you say. Adieu,
She said, and to the covey flew.

FABLE XXXI

THE UNIVERSAL APPARITION

A RAKE, by ev'ry passion ruled,
With ev'ry vice his youth had cool'd ;
Disease his tainted blood assails ;
His spirits droop, his vigour fails :
With secret ills at home he pines, 5
And, like infirm old age, declines.

As, twinged with pain, he pensive sits,
 And raves, and prays, and swears by fits ;
 A ghastly phantom, lean and wan,
 Before him rose, and thus began : 10

My name, perhaps, hath reach'd your ear ;
 Attend, and be advised by Care.

Nor love, nor honour, wealth, nor power,
 Can give the heart a cheerful hour,
 When health is lost. Be timely wise : 15
 With health all taste of pleasure flies.

Thus said, the phantom disappears,
 The wary counsel waked his fears :
 He now from all excess abstains,
 With physic purifies his veins ; 20
 And, to procure a sober life,
 Resolves to venture on a wife.

But now again the Sprite ascends,
 Where'er he walks his ear attends ;
 Insinuates that beauty's frail, 25
 That perseverance must prevail ;
 With jealousies his brain inflames,
 And whispers all her lovers' names.
 In other hours she represents
 His household charge, his annual rents, 30
 Increasing debts, perplexing duns,
 And nothing for his younger sons.

Straight all his thought to gain he turns,
 And with the thirst of lucre burns.
 But when possess'd of fortune's store, 35
 The Spectre haunts him more and more ;
 Sets want and misery in view,
 Bold thieves and all the murd'ring crew,

Alarms him with eternal frights,
 Infests his dream, or wakes his nights. 40

How shall he chase this hideous guest ?
 Power may perhaps protect his rest.
 To power he rose. Again the Sprite
 Besets him morning, noon, and night !
 Talks of Ambition's tott'ring seat, 45
 How Envy persecutes the great,
 Of rival hate, of treach'rous friends,
 And what disgrace his fall attends.

The court he quits to fly from Care,
 And seeks the peace of rural air : 50
 His groves, his fields, amused his hours ;
 He pruned his trees, he raised his flowers,
 But Care again his steps pursues ;
 Warns him of blasts, of blighting dews,
 Of plund'ring insects, snails, and rains, 55
 And droughts that starved the labour'd plains.
 Abroad, at home, the Spectre's there :
 In vain we seek to fly from Care.

At length he thus the Ghost address:
 Since thou must be my constant guest, 60
 Be kind and follow me no more ;
 For Care, by right, should go before.

FABLE XXXII

THE TWO OWLS AND THE SPARROW

Two formal Owls together sat,
 Conferring thus in solemn chat :

How is the modern taste decay'd !
 Where 's the respect to wisdom paid ?
 Our worth the Grecian sages knew ; 5
 They gave our sires the honour due ;
 They weigh'd the dignity of fowls,
 And pry'd into the depth of Owls.
 Athens the seat of learned fame,
 With gen'ral voice revered our name ; 10
 On merit, title was conferr'd,
 And all adored th' Athenian bird.

Brother, you reason well, replies
 The solemn mate, with half-shut eyes ;
 Right. Athens was the seat of learning, 15
 And truly wisdom is discerning.
 Besides, on Pallas' helm we sit,
 The type and ornament of wit :
 But now, alas ! we 're quite neglected,
 And a pert Sparrow 's more respected. 20

A Sparrow, who was lodged beside,
 O'erhears them soothe each other's pride,
 And thus he nimbly vents his heat :

Who meets a fool must find conceit.
 I grant, you were at Athens graced, 25
 And on Minerva's helm were placed ;
 But ev'ry bird that wings the sky,
 Except an Owl, can tell you why,
 From hence they taught their schools to know
 How false we judge by outward show ; 30
 That we should never looks esteem,
 Since fools as wise as you might seem.
 Would ye contempt and scorn avoid,
 Let your vainglory be destroy'd :

Humble your arrogance of thought, 35
 Pursue the ways by Nature taught ;
 So shall ye find delicious fare,
 And grateful farmers praise your care :
 So shall sleek mice your chase reward,
 And no keen cat find more regard. 40

FABLE XXXIII

THE COURTIER AND PROTEUS

WHENE'ER a Courtier's out of place,
 The country shelters his disgrace ;
 Where, doom'd to exercise and health,
 His house and gardens own his wealth.
 He builds new schemes in hopes to gain 5
 The plunder of another reign ;
 Like Philip's son, would fain be doing
 And sighs for other realms to ruin.
 As one of these (without his wand)
 Pensive, along the winding strand 10
 Employed the solitary hour
 In projects to regain his power ;
 The waves in spreading circles ran,
 Proteus arose, and thus began :
 Came you from Court ? For in your mien 15
 A self-important air is seen.
 He frankly own'd his friends had trick'd him,
 And how he fell his party's victim.
 Know, says the god, by matchless skill
 I change to ev'ry shape at will ; 20

But yet I'm told, at court you see
Those who presume to rival me.

Thus said, a snake with hideous trail,
Proteus extends his scaly mail.

Know, says the man, though proud in place, 25
All courtiers are of reptile race.

Like you, they take that dreadful form,
Bask in the sun, and fly the storm ;
With malice hiss, with envy gloat,
And for convenience change their coat ; 30
With new-got lustre rear their head,
Though on a dunghill born and bred.

Sudden the god a lion stands ;
He shakes his mane, he spurns the sands ;
Now a fierce lynx, with fiery glare, 35
A wolf, an ass, a fox, a bear.

Had I ne'er lived at court, he cries,
Such transformation might surprise ;
But there, in quest of daily game,
Each able courtier acts the same. 40

Wolves, lions, lynxes, while in place,
Their friends and fellows are their chase.

They play the bear's and fox's part ;
Now rob by force, now steal with art.
They sometimes in the senate bray ; 45
Or, changed again to beasts of prey.

Down from the lion to the ape,
Practise the frauds of ev'ry shape.

So said, upon the god he flies,
In cords the struggling captive ties. 50

Now, Proteus, now (to truth compell'd)
Speak, and confess thy art excell'd.

Use strength, surprise, or what you will,
 The Courtier finds evasion still ;
 Not to be bound by any ties, 55
 And never forced to leave his lies.

FABLE XXXIV

THE MASTIFF

THOSE who in quarrels interpose
 Must often wipe a bloody nose.
 A Mastiff, of true English blood,
 Loved fighting better than his food.
 When dogs were snarling for a bone, 5
 He long'd to make the war his own,
 And often found (when two contend)
 To interpose obtain'd his end ;
 He gloried in his limping pace ;
 The scars of honour seam'd his face ; 10
 In ev'ry limb a gash appears,
 And frequent fights retrench'd his ears.
 As, on a time, he heard from far
 Two dogs engaged in noisy war,
 Away he scours and lays about him, 15
 Resolved no fray should be without him.
 Forth from his yard a tanner flies,
 And to the bold intruder cries :
 A cudgel shall correct your manners,
 Whence sprung this cursed hate to tanners ? 20
 While on my dog you vent your spite,
 Sirrah ! 'tis me you dare not bite.

To see the battle thus perplex'd,
 With equal rage a butcher vex'd,
 Hoarse-screaming from the circled crowd, 25
 To the cursed Mastiff cries aloud :

Both Hockley-hole and Mary-bone
 The combats of my Dog have known.
 He ne'er, like bullies coward-hearted,
 Attacks in public to be parted. 30
 Think not, rash fool, to share his fame :
 Be his the honour or the shame.

Thus said, they swore, and raved like thunder ;
 They dragg'd their fasten'd dogs asunder ;
 While clubs and kicks from every side 35
 Rebounded from the Mastiff's hide.

All reeking now with sweat and blood,
 Awhile the parted warriors stood,
 Then pour'd upon the meddling foe ;
 Who, worried, howl'd and sprawl'd below. 40
 He rose, and limping from the fray,
 By both sides mangled, sneak'd away.

FABLE XXXV

THE BARLEY-MOW AND THE DUNGHILL

How many saucy airs we meet
 From Temple Bar to Aldgate Street !
 Proud rogues, who shared the South Sea prey,
 And sprung like mushrooms in a day !
 They think it mean to condescend 5
 To know a brother or a friend ;

They blush to hear their mother's name,
And by their pride expose their shame.

As cross his yard, at early day,
A careful farmer took his way, 10
He stopp'd, and leaning on his fork,
Observed the flail's incessant work.

In thought he measured all his store,
His geese, his hogs, he number'd o'er ;
In fancy weigh'd the fleeces shorn, 15
And multiplied the next year's corn.

A Barley-mow, which stood beside,
Thus to its musing master cried :

Say, good Sir, is it fit or right
To treat me with neglect and slight ? 20

Me, who contribute to your cheer,
And raise your mirth with ale and beer ?
Why thus insulted, thus disgraced,
And that vile Dunghill near me placed ?

Are those poor sweepings of a groom, 25
That filthy sight, that nauseous fume,
Meet objects here ? Command it hence :

A thing so mean must give offence.

The humble Dunghill thus replied :
Thy master hears, and mocks thy pride ; 30

Insult not thus the meek and low ;
In me thy benefactor know ;

My warm assistance gave thee birth,
Or thou hadst perish'd low in earth ;

But upstarts, to support their station, 35
Cancel at once all obligation

FABLE XXXVI

PYTHAGORAS AND THE COUNTRYMAN

PYTHAG'RAS rose at early dawn
 By soaring meditation drawn,
 To breathe the fragrance of the day,
 Through flowery fields he took his way.
 In musing contemplation warm, 5
 His steps misled him to a farm,
 Where, on the ladder's topmost round,
 A pheasant stood ; the hammer's sound
 Shook the weak barn. Say, friend, what care
 Calls for thy honest labour there ? 10

The Clown with surly voice replies :
 Vengeance aloud for justice cries.
 This kite, by daily rapine fed,
 My hens' annoy, my turkeys' dread,
 At length his forfeit life has paid ; 15
 See, on the wall, his wings display'd,
 Here nail'd, a terror to his kind,
 My fowls shall future safety find,
 My yard the thriving poultry feed,
 And my barn's refuse fat the breed. 20

Friend, says the Sage, the doom is wise ;
 For public good the murd'rer dies.
 But, if these tyrants of the air
 Demand a sentence so severe,
 Think how the glutton man devours ; 25
 What bloody feasts regale his hours !
 O impudence of power and might,
 Thus to condemn a hawk or kite,

When thou, perhaps, carniv'rous sinner,
Hadst pullets yesterday for dinner ! 30

Hold, cried the Clown, with passion heated,
Shall kites and men alike be treated ?

When heav'n the world with creatures stored,
Man was ordain'd their sov'reign lord.

Thus tyrants boast, the Sage replied, 35
Whose murders spring from power and pride.

Own then this manlike kite is slain

Thy greater lux'ry to sustain ;

For 'petty rogues submit to fate,

That great ones may enjoy their state.' 40

FABLE XXXVII

THE FARMER'S WIFE AND THE RAVEN

WHY are those tears? Why droops your head?

Is, then, your other husband dead?

Or does a worse disgrace betide?

Hath no one since his death applied?

Alas! you know the cause too well : 5

The salt is spilt, to me it fell.

Then, to contribute to my loss,

My knife and fork were laid across ;

On Friday, too! the day I dread!

Would I were safe at home in bed ! 10

Last night (I vow to heav'n 'tis true !)

Bounce from the fire a coffin flew.

Next post some fatal news shall tell.

God send my Cornish friends be well !

Unhappy widow, cease thy tears, 15
 Nor feel affliction in thy fears,
 Let not thy stomach be suspended ;
 Eat now, and weep when dinner's ended ;
 And, when the butler clears the table,
 For thy dessert, I'll read my fable. 20

Betwixt her swaggering panniers' load
 A farmer's wife to market rode,
 And, jogging on, with thoughtful care
 Summ'd up the profits of her ware ;
 When, starting from her silver dream, 25
 Thus far and wide was heard her scream :

That raven on yon left-hand oak
 (Curse on his ill-betiding croak !)
 Bodes me no good. No more she said,
 When poor blind Ball, with stumbling tread, 30
 Fell prone ; o'erturned the pannier lay,
 And her mash'd eggs bestrow'd the way.

She, sprawling in the yellow road,
 Rail'd, swore, and cursed. Thou croaking toad,
 A murrain take thy whoreson throat ! 35
 I knew misfortune in the note.

Dame, quoth the Raven, spare your oaths,
 Unclench your fist, and wipe your clothes.
 But why on me those curses thrown ?
 Goody, the fault was all your own ; 40
 For had you laid this brittle ware
 On Dun, the old sure-footed mare,
 Though all the Ravens of the Hundred
 With croaking had your tongue out-thunder'd,
 Sure-footed Dun had kept his legs, 45
 And you, good woman, saved your eggs.

FABLE XXXVIII

THE TURKEY AND THE ANT

IN other men we faults can spy,
 And blame the mote that dims their eye ;
 Each little speck and blemish find,
 To our own stronger errors blind.

A Turkey, tired of common food, 5
 Forsook the barn, and sought the wood ;
 Behind her ran her infant train,
 Collecting here and there a grain.

Draw near, my birds, the mother cries,
 This hill delicious fare supplies ; 10
 Behold, the busy Negro race ;
 See, millions blacken all the place !
 Fear not. Like me, with freedom eat ;
 An Ant is most delightful meat.

How bless'd, how envied were our life, 15
 Could we but 'scape the poulter's knife !
 But man, cursed man, on Turkey preys,
 And Christmas shortens all our days :
 Sometimes with oysters we combine,
 Sometimes assist the sav'ry chine. 20
 From the low peasant to the lord,
 The Turkey smokes on ev'ry board.
 Sure men for gluttony are curst,
 Of the sev'n deadly sins the worst.

An Ant, who climb'd beyond his reach, 25
 Thus answer'd from the neighb'ring beech,
 Ere you remark another's sin,
 Bid thy own conscience look within.
 Control thy more voracious bill,
 Nor for a breakfast nations kill. 30

FABLE XXXIX.

THE FATHER AND JUPITER

THE man to Jove his suit preferr'd ;
 He begg'd a wife. His prayer was heard.
 Jove wonder'd at his bold addressing :
 For how precarious is the blessing !

A wife he takes. And now for heirs 5
 Again he worries heav'n with prayers.
 Jove nods assent. Two hopeful boys
 And a fine girl reward his joys.

Now, more solicitous he grew,
 And set their future lives in view ; 10
 He saw that all respect and duty
 Were paid to wealth, to power, and beauty.

Once more, he cries, accept my prayer ;
 Make my loved progeny thy care.
 Let my first hope, my fav'rite boy, 15
 All fortune's richest gifts enjoy.
 My next with strong ambition fire :
 May favour teach him to aspire ;
 Till he the step of power ascend,
 And courtiers to their idol bend. 20

With ev'ry grace, with ev'ry charm,
 My daughter's perfect features arm.
 If Heav'n approve, a Father's blest.
 Jove smiles, and grants his full request.

The first, a miser at the heart, 25
 Studios of ev'ry griping art,
 Heaps hoards on hoards with anxious pain ;
 And all his life devotes to gain.

He feels no joy, his cares increase,
 He neither wakes nor sleeps in peace ; 30
 In fancied want (a wretch complete)
 He starves, and yet he dares not eat.

The next to sudden honours grew,
 The thriving art of courts he knew ;
 He reach'd the height of power and place, 35
 Then fell the victim of disgrace.

Beauty with early bloom supplies
 His daughter's cheek and points her eyes.
 The vain coquette each suit disdains,
 And glories in her lovers' pains. 40

With age she fades, each lover flies,
 Contemn'd, forlorn, she pines and dies.

When Jove the Father's grief survey'd,
 And heard him Heav'n and Fate upbraid,
 Thus spoke the God : By outward show, 45
 Men judge of happiness and woe :

Shall ignorance of good and ill
 Dare to direct th' eternal will ?
 Seek virtue ; and of that possest,
 To Providence resign the rest. 50

FABLE XL

THE TWO MONKEYS

THE learned, full of inward pride,
 The fops of outward show deride ;
 The Fop, with learning at defiance,
 Scoffs at the pedant and the science ;

The Don, a formal, solemn strutter,
 Despises Monsieur's airs and flutter ;
 While Monsieur mocks the formal fool,
 Who looks and speaks and walks by rule.
 Britain, a medley of the twain,
 As pert as France, as grave as Spain ; 10
 In fancy wiser than the rest,
 Laughs at them both, of both the jest.
 Is not the poet's chiming close
 Censured by all the sons of prose ?
 While bards of quick imagination 15
 Despise the sleepy prose narration.
 Men laugh at apes, they men contemn ;
 For what are we but apes to them ?
 Two Monkeys went to Southwark fair ;
 No critics had a sourer air ; 20
 They forced their way through draggled folks,
 Who gaped to catch Jack-Pudding's jokes ;
 Then took their tickets for the show,
 And got by chance the foremost row.
 To see their grave observing face 25
 Provoked a laugh through all the place.
 Brother, says Pug, and turn'd his head
 The rabble 's monstrously ill-bred.
 Now through the booth loud hisses ran,
 Nor ended till the show began. 30
 The tumbler whirls the flip-flap round,
 With somersets he shakes the ground ;
 The cord beneath the dancer springs ;
 Aloft in air the vaulter swings ;
 Distorted now, now prone depends, 35
 Now through his twisted arms ascends :

The crowd, in wonder and delight,
 With clapping hands applaud the sight.
 With smiles, quoth Pug, if pranks like these
 The giant Apes of reason please, 40
 How would they wonder at our arts !
 They must adore us for our parts.
 High on the twig I 've seen you cling ;
 Play, twist, and turn in airy ring :
 How can those clumsy things, like me, 45
 Fly with a bound from tree to tree ?
 But yet, by this applause, we find
 These emulators of our kind
 Discern our worth, our parts regard,
 Who our mean mimics thus reward. 50
 Brother, the grinning mate replies,
 In this I grant that Man is wise.
 While good example they pursue,
 We must allow some praise is due ;
 But when they strain beyond their guide, 55
 I laugh to scorn the mimic pride.
 For how fantastic is the sight,
 To meet men always bolt upright,
 Because we sometimes walk on two !
 I hate the imitating crew. 60

FABLE XLI

THE OWL AND THE FARMER

AN owl of grave deport and mien,
 Who (like the Turk) was seldom seen,

Within a barn had chose his station,
 As fit for prey and contemplation.
 Upon a beam aloft he sits, 5
 And nods, and seems to think, by fits.
 So have I seen a man of news,
 Or 'Post-boy,' or 'Gazette,' peruse ;
 Smoke, nod, and talk with voice profound,
 And fix the fate of Europe round. 10

Sheaves piled on sheaves hid all the floor.
 At dawn of morn, to view his store
 The Farmer came. The hooting guest
 His self-importance thus exprest :

Reason in man is mere pretence : 15
 How weak, how shallow is his sense !
 To treat with scorn the bird of night,
 Declares his folly, or his spite.
 Then, too, how partial is his praise !
 The lark's, the linnet's chirping lays 20
 To his ill-judging ears are fine,
 And nightingales are all divine.
 But the more knowing feather'd race
 See wisdom stamp'd upon my face.
 Whene'er to visit light I deign, 25
 What flocks of fowl compose my train !
 Like slaves they crowd my flight behind,
 And own me of superior kind.

The Farmer laugh'd, and thus replied :
 Thou dull important lump of pride, 30
 Dar'st thou with that harsh grating tongue,
 Depreciate birds of warbling song ?
 Indulge thy spleen. Know, men and fowl
 Regard thee, as thou art, an Owl.

Besides, proud Blockhead, be not vain 35
 Of what thou call'st thy slaves and train.
 Few follow wisdom or her rules ;
 Fools in derision follow fools.

FABLE XLII

THE JUGGLERS

A JUGGLER long through all the town
 Had raised his fortune and renown ;
 You 'd think (so far his art transcends)
 The devil at his fingers' ends.
 Vice heard his fame, she read his bill ; 5
 Convinced of his inferior skill,
 She sought his booth, and from the crowd
 Defied the man of art aloud.
 Is this, then, he so famed for 'sleight ?
 Can this slow bungler cheat your sight ! 10
 Dares he with me dispute the prize ?
 I leave it to impartial eyes.
 Provok'd, the Juggler cried, 'tis done.
 In science I submit to none.
 Thus said, the cups and balls he play'd ; 15
 By turns, this here, that there, convey'd
 The cards, obedient to his words,
 Are by a fillip turn'd to birds.
 His little boxes change the grain :
 Trick after trick deludes the train. 20
 He shakes his bag, he shows all fair ;
 His fingers spreads, and nothing there ;

Then bids it rain with showers of gold,
And now his iv'ry eggs are told.
But when from thence the hen he draws, 25
Amazed spectators hum applause.

Vice now stept forth, and took the place
With all the forms of his grimace.

This magic looking-glass, she cries
(There, hand it round), will charm your eyes. 30
Each eager eye the sight desired,
And ev'ry man himself admired.

Next to a senator addressing ;
See this bank-note ; observe the blessing,
Breathe on the bill. Heigh, pass ! 'Tis gone. 35
Upon his lips a padlock shone.
A second puff the magic broke,
The padlock vanish'd, and he spoke.

Twelve bottles ranged upon the board,
All full, with heady liquor stored, 40
By clean conveyance disappear,
And now two bloody swords are there.

A purse she to a thief exposed,
At once his ready fingers closed ;
He opes his fist, the treasure 's fled ; 45
He sees a halter in its stead.

She bids ambition hold a wand ;
He grasps a hatchet in his hand.

A box of charity she shows :
Blow here ; and a churchwarden blows. 50
'Tis vanish'd with conveyance neat,
And on the table smokes a treat.

She shakes the dice, the board she knocks,
And from her pockets fills her box.

She next a meagre rake address. 55
 This picture see ; her shape, her breast !
 What youth, and what inviting eyes !
 Hold her, and have her. With surprise,
 His hand exposed a box of pills
 And a loud laugh proclaim'd his ills. 60
 A counter, in a miser's hand
 Grew twenty guineas at command.
 She bids his heir the sum retain,
 And 'tis a counter now again.
 A guinea with her touch you see 65
 Take ev'ry shape, but Charity ;
 And not one thing you saw, or drew,
 But changed from what was first in view.
 The Juggler now in grief of heart,
 With this submission own'd her art. 70
 Can I such matchless sleight withstand !
 How practice hath improved your hand !
 But now and then I cheat the throng ;
 You ev'ry day, and all day long.

FABLE XLIII

THE COUNCIL OF HORSES

UPON a time a neighing steed,
 Who grazed among a num'rous breed
 With mutiny had fired the train,
 And spread dissension through the plain.
 On matters that concern'd the state 5
 The council met in grand debate.

A colt, whose eyeballs flamed with ire,
 Elate with strength and youthful fire,
 In haste stept forth before the rest,
 And thus the list'ning throng address : 10
 Good gods ! how abject is our race,
 Condemn'd to slav'ry and disgrace !
 Shall we our servitude retain,
 Because our sires have borne the chain ?
 Consider, friends, your strength and might ; 15
 'Tis conquest to assert your right.
 How cumbrous is the gilded coach !
 The pride of man is our reproach.
 Were we design'd for daily toil,
 To drag the ploughshare through the soil, 20
 To sweat in harness through the road,
 To groan beneath the carrier's load ?
 How feeble are the two-legg'd kind !
 What force is in our nerves combined !
 Shall then our nobler jaws submit 25
 To foam and champ the galling bit ?
 Shall haughty man my back bestride ?
 Shall the sharp spur provoke my side ?
 Forbid it, heav'ns ! Reject the rein ;
 Your shame, your infamy disdain. 30
 Let him the Lion first control,
 And still the Tiger's famish'd growl.
 Let us, like them, our freedom claim,
 And make him tremble at our name.
 A general nod approved the cause, 35
 And all the circle neigh'd applause.
 When, lo ! with grave and solemn pace,
 A Steed advanced before the race ;

With age and long experience wise,
 Around he cast his thoughtful eyes, 40
 And, to the murmurs of the train,
 Thus spoke the Nestor of the plain :
 When I had health and strength, like you,
 The toils of servitude I knew ;
 Now grateful man rewards my pains, 45
 And gives me all these wide domains.
 At will I crop the year's increase ;
 My latter life is rest and peace.
 I grant to man we lend our pains,
 And aid him to correct the plains. 50
 But doth not he divide the care,
 Through all the labours of the year?
 How many thousand structures rise,
 To fence us from inclement skies !
 For us he bears the sultry day, 55
 And stores up all our winter's hay.
 He sows, he reaps the harvest's gain ;
 We share the toil and share the grain.
 Since ev'ry creature was decreed
 To aid each other's mutual need, 60
 Appease your discontented mind,
 And act the part by heav'n assign'd.
 The tumult ceased. The colt submitted,
 And, like his ancestors, was bitted.

FABLE XLIV

THE HOUND AND THE HUNTSMAN

IMPERTINENCE at first is borne
 With heedless slight, or smiles of scorn ;

Teased into wrath, what patience bears
The noisy fool who perseveres?

The morning wakes, the Huntsman sounds, 5
At once rush forth the joyful hounds.
They seek the wood with eager pace,
Through bush, through brier, explore the chase.
Now scatter'd wide, they try the plain,
And snuff the dewy turf in vain. 10

What care, what industry, what pains !
What universal silence reigns !

Ringwood, a Dog of little fame,
Young, pert, and ignorant of game,
At once displays his babbling throat ; 15
The pack, regardless of the note,
Pursue the scent ; with louder strain
He still persists to vex the train.

The Huntsman to the clamour flies ;
The smacking lash he smartly plies. 20
His ribs all welk'd, with howling tone
The puppy thus express'd his moan :

I know the music of my tongue
Long since the pack with envy stung.
What will not spite? These bitter smarts 25
I owe to my superior parts.

When puppies prate, the Huntsman cried,
They show both ignorance and pride :
Fools may our scorn, not envy, raise,
For envy is a kind of praise. 30

Had not thy forward noisy tongue
Proclaim'd thee always in the wrong,
Thou might'st have mingled with the rest,
And ne'er thy foolish nose confest.

But fools, to talking ever prone, 35
 Are sure to make their follies known.

FABLE XLV

THE POET AND THE ROSE

I HATE the man who builds his name
 On ruins of another's fame.
 Thus prudes, by characters o'erthrown,
 Imagine that they raise their own.
 Thus scribblers, covetous of praise, 5
 Think slander can transplant the bays.
 Beauties and bards have equal pride,
 With both all rivals are decried.
 Who praises Lesbia's eyes and feature,
 Must call her sister awkward creature ; 10
 For the kind flatt'ry's sure to charm,
 When we some other nymph disarm.
 As in the cool of early day
 A Poet sought the sweets of May,
 The garden's fragrant breath ascends, 15
 And ev'ry stalk with odour bends.
 A rose he pluck'd, he gazed, admired,
 Thus singing as the Muse inspired :
 Go, Rose, my Chloe's bosom grace ;
 How happy should I prove, 20
 Might I supply that envied place
 With never-fading love !
 There, Phœnix-like, beneath her eye,
 Involved in fragrance, burn and die !

Know, hapless flower, that thou shalt find 25
 More fragrant roses there ;
 I see thy with'ring head reclined
 With envy and despair !
 One common fate we both must prove ;
 You die with envy, I with love. 30

Spare your comparisons, replied
 An angry Rose who grew beside.
 Of all mankind, you should not flout us ;
 What can a Poet do without us ?
 In ev'ry love-song roses bloom, 35
 We lend you colour and perfume.
 Does it to Chloe's charms conduce,
 To found her praise on our abuse ?
 Must we, to flatter her, be made
 To wither, envy, pine, and fade ? 40

FABLE XLVI

THE CUR, THE HORSE, AND THE SHEPHERD'S DOG

THE lad of all-sufficient merit,
 With modesty ne'er damps his spirit ;
 Presuming on his own deserts,
 On all alike his tongue exerts ;
 His noisy jokes at random throws, 5
 And pertly spatters friends and foes ;
 In wit and war the bully race
 Contribute to their own disgrace.
 Too late the forward youth shall find
 That jokes are sometimes paid in kind ; 10

Or if they canker in the breast,
He makes a foe who makes a jest.

A village-cur, of snappish race,
The pertest Puppy of the place,
Imagined that his treble throat 15
Was blest with music's sweetest note ;
In the mid road he basking lay,
The yelping nuisance of the way ;
For not a creature pass'd along,
But had a sample of his song. 20

Soon as the trotting steed he hears,
He starts, he cocks his dapper ears ;
Away he scours, assaults his hoof ;
Now near him snarls, now barks aloof ;
With shrill impertinence attends, 25
Nor leaves him till the village ends.

It chanced, upon his evil day,
A Pad came pacing down the way ;
The Cur, with never-ceasing tongue,
Upon the passing trav'ler sprung. 30
The Horse, from scorn provoked to ire,
Flung backward ; rolling in the mire,
The Puppy howl'd, and bleeding lay ;
The Pad in peace pursued his way.

A Shepherd's Dog, who saw the deed, 35
Detesting the vexatious breed,
Bespoke him thus : When coxcombs prate,
They kindle wrath, contempt, or hate ;
Thy teasing tongue had judgment tied,
Thou hadst not, like a Puppy, died. 40

FABLE XLVII

THE COURT OF DEATH

DEATH, on a solemn night of state,
 In all his pomp of terror sate :
 Th' attendants of his gloomy reign,
 Diseases dire, a ghastly train !
 Crowd the vast Court. With hollow tone, 5
 A voice thus thunder'd from the throne :

This night our minister we namè,
 Let ev'ry servant speak his claim ;
 Merit shall bear this ebon wand.
 All, at the word, stretch'd forth their hand. 10

Fever, with burning heat possessè,
 Advanced, and for the wand address :
 I to the weekly bills appeal,
 Let those express my fervent zeal ;
 On ev'ry slight occasion near, 15
 With violence I persevere.

Next Gout appears with limping pace,
 Pleads how he shifts from place to place,
 From head to foot how swift he flies,
 And ev'ry joint and sinew plies ; 20
 Still working when he seems supprest,
 A most tenacious stubborn guest.

A haggard Spectre from the crew
 Crawls forth, and thus asserts his due :
 'Tis I who taint the sweetest joy, 25
 And in the shape of love destroy :
 My shanks, sunk eyes, and noseless face
 Prove my pretension to the place.

Stone urged his ever-growing force ;
 And, next, Consumption's meagre corse, 30
 With feeble voice, that scarce was heard,
 Broke with short coughs, his suit preferr'd :
 Let none object my ling'ring way,
 I gain, like Fabius, by delay ;
 Fatigue and weaken ev'ry foe 35
 By long attack, secure, though slow.
 Plague represents his rapid power,
 Who thinn'd a nation in an hour.
 All spoke their claim, and hoped the wand.
 Now expectation hush'd the band, 40
 When thus the Monarch from the throne :
 Merit was ever modest known.
 What, no Physician speak his right !
 None here? But fees their toils requite.
 Let then Intemp'rance take the wand 45
 Who fills with gold their zealous hand.
 You, Fever, Gout, and all the rest
 (Whom wary men as foes detest)
 Forego your claim ; no more pretend ;
 Intemp'rance is esteem'd a friend ; 50
 He shares their mirth, their social joys,
 And, as a courted guest, destroys.
 The charge on him must justly fall,
 Who finds employment for you all.

FABLE XLVIII

THE GARDENER AND THE HOG

A GARD'NER, of peculiar taste,
 On a young Hog his favour placed ;
 Who fed not with the common herd,
 His tray was to the hall preferr'd.
 He wallow'd underneath the board, 5
 Or in his master's chamber snored ;
 Who fondly stroked him ev'ry day,
 And taught him all the puppy's play.
 Where'er he went, the grunting friend
 Ne'er fail'd his pleasure to attend. 10

As on a time, the loving pair
 Walk'd forth to tend the garden's care,
 The Master thus address'd the Swine :
 My house, my garden, all is thine.
 On turnips feast whene'er you please, 15
 And riot in my beans and peas ;
 If the potato's taste delights,
 Or the red carrot's sweet invites,
 Indulge thy morn and evening hours,
 But let due care regard my flowers : 20
 My tulips are my garden's pride,
 What vast expense those beds supplied !

The Hog by chance one morning roam'd,
 Where with new ale the vessels foam'd.
 He munches now the steaming grains, 25
 Now with full swill the liquor drains.
 Intoxicating fumes arise :
 He reels, he rolls his winking eyes ;

Then stagg'ring, through the garden scours,
 And treads down painted ranks of flowers. 30
 With delving snout he turns the soil,
 And cools his palate with the spoil.

The Master came, the ruin spied,
 Villain, suspend thy rage, he cried.
 Hast thou, thou most ungrateful sot, 35
 My charge, my only charge forgot?
 What! all my flowers! No more he said,
 But gazed, and sigh'd, and hung his head.

The Hog with stutt'ring speech returns:
 Explain, Sir, why your anger burns. 40
 See there, untouch'd your tulips strown,
 For I devour'd the roots alone.

At this the Gard'ner's passion grows,
 From oaths and threats he fell to blows.
 The stubborn brute the blows sustains; 45
 Assaults his leg, and tears the veins.

Ah! foolish swain, too late you find
 That sties were for such friends design'd!

Homeward he limps with painful pace,
 Reflecting thus on past disgrace: 50
 Who cherishes a brutal mate
 Shall mourn the folly soon or late

FABLE XLIX

THE MAN AND THE FLEA

WHETHER on earth, in air, or main,
 Sure ev'ry thing alive is vain!

Does not the hawk all fowls survey,
 As destined only for his prey?
 And do not tyrants, prouder things, 5
 Think men were born for slaves to kings?

When the crab views the pearly strands,
 Or Tagus, bright with golden sands;
 Or crawls beside the coral grove,
 And hears the ocean roll above; 10
 Nature is too profuse, says he,
 Who gave all these to pleasure me!

When bord'ring pinks and roses bloom,
 And ev'ry garden breathes perfume;
 When peaches glow with sunny dyes, 15
 Like Laura's cheek, when blushes rise;
 When with huge figs the branches bend,
 When clusters from the vine depend;
 The snail looks round on flower and tree,
 And cries, All these were made for me! 20

What dignity's in human nature!
 Says Man, the most conceited creature,
 As from a cliff he cast his eye,
 And view'd the sea and arched sky.
 The sun was sunk beneath the main; 25
 The moon and all the starry train,
 Hung the vast vault of heav'n. The Man
 His contemplation thus began:

When I behold this glorious show,
 And the wide wat'ry world below, 30
 The scaly people of the main,
 The beasts that range the wood or plain,
 The wing'd inhabitants of air,
 The day, the night, the various year;

And know all these by heav'n design'd 35
 As gifts to pleasure human-kind ;
 I cannot raise my worth too high,
 Of what vast consequence am I!
 Not of th' importance you suppose,
 Replies a Flea upon his nose. 40
 Be humble, learn thyself to scan ;
 Know, pride was never made for Man.
 'Tis vanity that swells thy mind.
 What, heav'n and earth for thee design'd !
 For thee ! made only for our need, 45
 That more important Fleas might feed.

FABLE L

THE HARE AND MANY FRIENDS

FRIENDSHIP, like love, is but a name,
 Unless to one you stint the flame.
 The child, whom many fathers share,
 Hath seldom known a father's care.
 'Tis thus in friendships ; who depend 5
 On many, rarely find a friend.

A Hare who in a civil way,
 Complied with ev'ry thing, like Gay,
 Was known by all the bestial train,
 Who haunt the wood, or graze the plain. 10
 Her care was, never to offend,
 And ev'ry creature was her friend.

As forth she went at early dawn
 To taste the dew-besprinkled lawn,

Behind she hears the hunter's cries, 15
And from the deep-mouth'd thunder flies.
She starts, she stops, she pants for breath ;
She hears the near advance of death ;
She doubles to mislead the hound,
And measures back her mazy round ; 20
'Till fainting in the public way,
Half-dead with fear, she gasping lay.

What transport in her bosom grew,
When first the Horse appear'd in view !

Let me, says she, your back ascend, 25
And owe my safety to a friend.
You know my feet betray my flight ;
To friendship every burden's light.

The Horse replied : Poor honest Puss,
It grieves my heart to see thee thus ; 30
Be comforted, relief is near ;
For all your friends are in the rear.

She next the stately Bull implored,
And thus replied the mighty Lord :
Since ev'ry beast alive can tell 35
That I sincerely wish you well,
I may, without offence, pretend
To take the freedom of a friend.
Love calls me hence ; a fav'rite cow
Expects me near yon barley-mow ; 40
And when a lady's in the case,
You know all other things give place.
To leave you thus might seem unkind,
But see, the Goat is just behind.

The Goat remark'd her pulse was high, 45
Her languid head, her heavy eye :

My back, says he, may do you harm ;
The Sheep's at hand, the wool is warm.

The Sheep was feeble, and complain'd
His sides a load of wool sustain'd : 50
Said he was slow, confess'd his fears ;
For hounds eat Sheep as well as Hares !

She n^ow the trotting Calf address'd,
To save from death a friend distress'd :

Shall I, says he, of tender age, 55
In this important care engage ?

Older and abler pass'd you by ;
How strong are those ! how weak am I !
Should I presume to bear you hence,
Those friends of mine may take offence 60
Excuse me, then. You know my heart
But dearest friends, alas ! must par
How shall we all lament ! Adieu
For see the hounds are just in view.

THE FABLES

VOLUME THE SECOND

ADVERTISEMENT

THESE Fables were finished by Mr. Gay, and intended for the press, a short time before his death; when they were left, with his other papers, to the care of his noble friend and patron, the Duke of Queensberry. His Grace has accordingly permitted them to the press, and they are here printed from the originals in the author's own handwriting. We hope they will please equally with his former Fables, though mostly on subjects of a graver and more political turn. They will certainly show him to have been (what he esteemed the best character) a man of a truly honest heart, and a sincere lover of his country.

VOLUME THE SECOND

FABLE I

THE DOG AND THE FOX

To a Lawyer

I KNOW you Lawyers can with ease
Twist words and meanings as you please
That language, by your skill made pliant,
Will bend to favour ev'ry client ;
That 'tis the fee directs the sense 5
To make out either side's pretence.
When you peruse the clearest case,
You see it with a double face ;
For scepticism 's your profession ;
You hold there 's doubt in all expression. 10
Hence is the bar with fees supplied ;
Hence eloquence takes either side.
Your hand would have but paltry gleaning
Could ev'ry man express his meaning.
Who dares presume to pen a deed, 15
Unless you previously are fee'd ?
'Tis drawn ; and, to augment the cost,
In dull prolixity engross'd.

And now we're well secured by law,
Till the next brother find a flaw. 20

Read o'er a will. Was 't ever known
But you could make the will your own ;
For when you read, 'tis with intent
To find out meanings never meant.
Since things are thus, *se defendendo*, 25
I bar fallacious innuendo.

Sagacious Porta's skill could trace
Some beast or bird in ev'ry face.
The head, the eye, the nose's shape,
Proved this an owl, and that an ape. 30
When, in the sketches thus design'd,
Resemblance brings some friend to mind,
You show the piece, and give the hint,
And find each feature in the print :
So monstrous like the portrait's found, 35
All know it, and the laugh goes round.
Like him, I draw from gen'ral nature ;
Is 't I or you then fix the satire ?

So, Sir, I beg you spare your pains
In making comments on my strains. 40
All private slander I detest,
I judge not of my neighbour's breast :
Party and prejudice I hate,
And write no libels on the state.

Shall not my fable censure vice, 45
Because a knave is over-nice ?
And, lest the guilty hear and dread,
Shall not the decalogue be read ?
If I lash vice in gen'ral fiction,
Is 't I apply, or self-conviction ? 50

Brutes are my theme. Am I to blame,
If men in morals are the same?

I no man call or ape or ass :

'Tis his own conscience holds the glass.

Thus void of all offence I write : 55

Who claims the fable, knows his right.

A shepherd's dog unskill'd in sports,

Pick'd up acquaintance of all sorts ;

Among the rest, a Fox he knew ;

By frequent chat their friendship grew. 60

Says Reynard, 'Tis a cruel case,
That man should stigmatise our race.

No doubt, among us rogues you find

As among Dogs, and human-kind ;

And yet (unknown to me and you) 65

There may be honest men and true.

Thus slander tries, whate'er it can,

To put us on the foot with man.

Let my own actions recommend ;

No prejudice can blind a friend : 70

You know me free from all disguise,

My honour as my life I prize.

By talk like this, from all mistrust

The Dog was cured, and thought him just.

As on a time the Fox held forth 75

On conscience, honesty, and worth,

Sudden he stopp'd ; he cock'd his ear ;

Low dropt his bushy tail with fear.

Bless us ! the hunters are abroad :

What 's all that clatter on the road ? 80

Hold, says the Dog, we're safe from harm ;

'Twas nothing but a false alarm.

At yonder town 'tis market day ;
 Some farmer's wife is on the way.
 'Tis so (I know her piebald mare), 85
 Dame Dobbins, with her poultry ware.

Reynard grew huff. Says he, this sneer
 From you I little thought to hear.
 Your meaning in your looks I see.
 Pray, what's Dame Dobbins, friend, to me ? 90
 Did I e'er make her poultry thinner ?
 Prove that I owe th' Dame a dinner.

Friend, quoth the Cur, I meant no harm :
 Then why so captious ? why so warm ?
 My words, in common acceptation, 92
 Could never give this provocation.
 No lamb (for ought I ever knew)
 May be more innocent than you.

At this, gall'd Reynard winced and swore
 Such language ne'er was giv'n before. 100

What's lamb to me ! This saucy hint
 Shows me, base knave, which way you squint,
 If th' other night your master lost
 Three lambs, am I to pay the cost ?
 Your vile reflections would imply 105
 That I'm the thief. You Dog, you lie.

Thou knave, thou fool (the Dog replied),
 The name is just, take either side ;
 Thy guilt these applications speak ;
 Sirrah, 'tis conscience makes you squeak ! 110

So saying, on the Fox he flies :
 The self-convicted felon dies.

FABLE II

THE VULTURE, THE SPARROW, AND OTHER BIRDS

To a Friend in the Country

ERE I begin, I must premise
 Our ministers are good and wise ;
 So, though malicious tongues apply,
 Pray, what care they, or what care I ?
 If I am free with courts ; be't known 5
 I ne'er presume to mean our own.
 If general morals seem to joke
 On ministers, and such like folk,
 A captious fool may take offence ;
 What then ? he knows his own pretence. 10
 I meddle with no state affairs,
 But spare my jest to save my ears.
 Our present schemes are too profound,
 For Machiavel himself to sound,
 To censure 'em I've no pretension, 15
 I own they 're past my comprehension.
 You say your brother wants a place
 ('Tis many a younger brother's case),
 And that he very soon intends
 To ply the court, and tease his friends ; 20
 If there his merits chance to find
 A patriot of an open mind,
 Whose constant actions prove him just
 To both a king's and people's trust,

May he with gratitude attend, 25
 And owe his rise to such a friend.

You praise his parts, for business fit,
 His learning, probity, and wit ;
 But those alone will never do,
 Unless his patron have 'em too. 30

I've heard of times (pray God defend us,
 We're not so good but he can mend us)
 When wicked ministers have trod
 On kings and people, law and God ;
 With arrogance they girt the throne, 35
 And knew no int'rest but their own.
 Then virtue, from preferment barr'd,
 Gets nothing but its own reward.

A gang of petty knaves attend 'em,
 With proper parts to recommend 'em. 40
 Then if their patron burn with lust,
 The first in favour's pimp the first.
 His doors are never closed to spies,
 Who cheer his heart with double lies ;
 They flatter him, his foes defame, 45
 So lull the pangs of guilt and shame.

If schemes of lucre haunt his brain,
 Projectors swell his greedy train ;
 Vile brokers ply his private ear
 With jobs of plunder for the year ; 50
 All consciences must bend and ply ;
 You must vote on, and not know why :
 Through thick and thin you must go on ;
 One scruple, and your place is gone.

Since plagues like these have curst a land, 55
 And fav'rites cannot always stand ;

Good courtiers should for change be ready,
 And not have principles too steady :
 For should a knave engross the power
 (God shield the realm from that sad hour), 60
 He must have rogues, or slavish fools :
 For what 's a knave without his tools ?

Wherever those a people drain,
 And strut with infamy and gain ;
 I envy not their guilt and state, 65
 And scorn to share the public hate.
 Let their own servile creatures rise
 By screening fraud, and venting lies ;
 Give me, kind heav'n, a private station,
 A mind serene for contemplation : 70
 Title and profit I resign ;
 The post of honour shall be mine.
 My fable read, their merits view,
 Then herd who will with such a crew.

In days of yore (my cautious rhymes 75
 Always except the present times)
 A greedy Vulture, skill'd in game,
 Inured to guilt, unawed by shame,
 Approach'd the throne in evil hour,
 And, step by step, intrudes to power 80
 When at the royal eagle's ear,
 He longs to ease the monarch's care.
 The monarch grants. With proud elate,
 Behold him minister of state !
 Around him throng the feather'd rout ; 85
 Friends must be served, and some must out :
 Each thinks his own the best pretension ;
 This asks a place, and that a pension.

The nightingale was set aside :
A forward daw his room supplied. 90

This bird (says he), for business fit,
Hath both sagacity and wit.
With all his turns, and shifts, and tricks,
He's docile, and at nothing sticks.
Then with his neighbours, one so free 95
At all times will connive at me.

The hawk had due distinction shown,
For parts and talents like his own.

Thousands of hireling cocks attend him,
As blust'ring bullies, to defend him. 100

At once the ravens were discarded,
And magpies with their posts rewarded.

Those fowls of omen I detest,
That pry into another's nest.
State lies must lose all good intent, 105
For they foresee and croak th' event.

My friends ne'er think, but talk by rote,
Speak what they're taught, and so to vote.

When rogues like these (a Sparrow cries)
To honours and employments rise 110
I court no favour, ask no place
From such, preferment is disgrace :
Within my thatch'd retreat I find
(What these ne'er feel) true peace of mind.

FABLE III

THE BABOON AND THE POULTRY

To a Levée-Hunter

We frequently misplace esteem
 By judging men by what they seem.
 To birth, wealth, power, we should allow
 Precedence and our lowest bow :
 In that is due distinction shown : 5
 Esteem is virtue's right alone.

With partial eye we 're apt to see
 The man of noble pedigree.
 We 're prepossesst my lord inherits
 In some degree his grandsire's merits ; 10
 For those we find upon record,
 But find him nothing bnt my lord.

When we with superficial view
 Gaze on the rich, we 're dazzled too.
 We know that wealth, well understood, 15
 Hath frequent power of doing good ;
 Then fancy that the thing is done,
 As if the power and will were one.
 Thus of the cheated crowd adore
 The thriving knaves that keep 'em poor. 20

The cringing train of power survey ;
 What creatures are so low as they !

With what obsequiousness they bend !
 To what vile actions condescend !
 Their rise is on their meanness built, 25
 And flatt'ry is their smallest guilt.
 What homage, rev'rence, adoration,
 In ev'ry age, in ev'ry nation,
 Have sycophants to power address'd !
 No matter who the power possess'd. 30
 Let ministers be what they will,
 You find their levees always fill.
 Even those who have perplex'd a state,
 Whose actions claim contempt and hate,
 Had wretches to applaud their schemes, 35
 Though more absurd than madmen's dreams.
 When barb'rous Moloch was invoked,
 The blood of infants only smoked ;
 But here (unless all hist'ry lies)
 Whole realms have been a sacrifice. 40
 Look through all courts—'Tis power we find
 The gen'ral idol of mankind ;
 There worshipp'd under ev'ry shape,
 Alike the lion, fox, and ape,
 Are follow'd by time-serving slaves, 45
 Rich prostitutes, and needy knaves.
 Who then shall glory in his post ?
 How frail his pride, how vain his boast !
 The followers of his prosp'rous hour
 Are as unstable as his power. 50
 Power by the breath of flatt'ry nursed,
 The more it swells, is nearer burst.
 The bubble breaks, the gewgaw ends,
 And in a dirty tear descends,

Once on a time, an ancient maid, 55
 By wishes and by time decay'd,
 To cure the pangs of restless thought,
 In birds and beasts amusement sought :
 Dogs, parrots, apes, her hours employ'd ;
 With these alone she talk'd and toy'd. 60

A huge Baboon her fancy took
 (Almost a man in size and look),
 He finger'd ev'ry thing he found,
 And mimick'd all the servants round.
 Then, too, his parts and ready wit 65
 Show'd him for ev'ry business fit.
 With all these talents, 'twas but just
 That Pug should hold a place of trust :
 So to her fav'rite was assign'd
 The charge of all her feather'd kind. 70
 'Twas his to tend 'em eve and morn,
 And portion out their daily corn.

Behold him now with haughty stride,
 Assume a ministerial pride !
 The morning rose. In hope of picking, 75
 Swans, turkeys, peacocks, ducks, and chicken,
 Fowls of all ranks surround his hut,
 To worship his important strut.
 The minister appears. The crowd
 Now here, now there, obsequious bow'd. 80
 This praised his parts, and that his face,
 T'other his dignity in place.
 From bill to bill the flatt'ry ran :
 He hears and bears it like a man ;
 For, when we flatter self-conceit, 85
 We but his sentiments repeat.

If we're too scrupulously just,
 What profit's in a place of trust ?
 The common practice of the great
 Is to secure a snug retreat. 90

So Pug began to turn his brain
 (Like other folks in place) on gain.

An apple-woman's stall was near,
 Well stock'd with fruits through all the year ;
 Here ev'ry day he cramm'd his guts, 95
 Hence were his hoards of pears and nuts ;
 For 'twas agreed (in way of trade)
 His payments should in corn be made.

The stock of grain was quickly spent,
 And no account which way it went. 100

Then, too, the poultry's starved condition
 Caused speculations of suspicion.

The facts were proved beyond dispute ;
 Pug must refund his hoards of fruit ;
 And, though then minister in chief, 105
 Was branded as a public thief.

Disgraced, despised, confined to chains,
 He nothing but his pride retains.

A goose pass'd by ; he knew the face,
 Seen ev'ry levee while in place. 110

What, no respect ! no rev'rence shown !
 How saucy are these creatures grown !
 Not two days since (says he) you bow'd
 The lowest of my fawning crowd.

Proud fool (replies the goose), 'tis true, 115
 Thy corn a flutt'ring levee drew !
 For that I join'd the hungry train,
 And sold thee flatt'ry for thy grain ;

But then, as now, conceited ape,
We saw thee in thy proper shape.

120

FABLE IV

THE ANT IN OFFICE

To a Friend

YOU tell me, that you apprehend
My verse may touchy folks offend.
In prudence, too, you think my rhymes
Should never squint at courtiers' crimes :
For though nor this nor that is meant, 5
Can we another's thoughts prevent ?

You ask me if I ever knew
Court chaplains thus the lawn pursue.
I meddle not with gown or lawn ;
Poets, I grant, to rise must fawn. 10
They know great ears are over-nice,
And never shock their patron's vice.
But I this hackney path despise ;
'Tis my ambition not to rise.

If I must prostitute the muse, 15
The base conditions I refuse.

I neither flatter nor defame,
Yet own I would bring guilt to shame.
If I corruption's hand expose,
I make corrupted men my foes. 20
What then? I hate the paltry tribe.
Be virtue mine ; be theirs the bribe.

I no man's property invade ;
 Corruption's yet no lawful trade.
 Nor would it mighty ills produce, 25
 Could I shame brib'ry out of use,
 I know 'twould cramp most politicians,
 Were they tied down to these conditions.
 'Twould stint their power, their riches bound,
 And make their parts seem less profound. 30
 Were they denied their proper tools,
 How could they lead their knaves and fools ?
 Were this the case, let's take a view,
 What dreadful mischiefs would ensue ;
 Though it might aggrandize the state, 35
 Could private luxury dine on plate ?
 Kings might indeed their friends reward,
 But ministers find less regard.
 Informers, sycophants, and spies,
 Would not augment the year's supplies. 40
 Perhaps, too, take away this prop,
 An annual job or two might drop.
 Besides, if pensions were denied,
 Could avarice support its pride ?
 It might e'en ministers confound, 45
 And yet the state be safe and sound.
 I care not though 'tis understood,
 I only mean my country's good :
 And (let who will my freedom blame)
 I wish all courtiers did the same. 50
 Nay, though some folks the less might get,
 I wish the nation out of debt.
 I put no private man's ambition
 With public good in competition :

- Rather than have our laws defaced, 55
 I'd vote a minister disgraced
 I strike at vice, be't where it will ;
 And what if great folks take it ill ?
 I hope corruption, brib'ry, pension,
 One may with detestation mention : 60
 Think you the law (let who will take it)
 Can *scandalum magnatum* make it ?
 I vent no slander, owe no grudge,
 Nor of another's conscience judge :
 At him or him I take no aim, 65
 Yet dare against all vice declaim.
 Shall I not censure breach of trust,
 Because knaves know themselves unjust ?
 That steward, whose account is clear,
 Demands his honour may appear : 70
 His actions never shun the light ;
 He is, and would be prov'd, upright.
 But then you think my Fable bears
 Allusion, too, to state affairs.
 I grant it does. And who's so great, 75
 That has the privilege to cheat ?
 If, then, in any future reign
 (For ministers may thirst for gain),
 Corrupted hands defraud the nation,
 I bar no reader's application. 80
 An Ant there was, whose forward prate
 Controll'd all matters in debate ;
 Whether he knew the thing or no,
 His tongue eternally would go.
 For he had impudence at will, 85
 And boasted universal skill.

Ambition was his point in view ;
 Thus, by degrees, to power he grew.
 Behold him now his drift attain :
 He 's made chief treas'rer of the grain. 90

But as their ancient laws are just,
 And punish breach of public trust,
 'Tis ordered (lest wrong application
 Should starve that wise, industrious nation)
 That all accounts be stated clear, 95
 Their stock, and what defray'd the year :
 That auditors shall these inspect,
 And public rapine thus be check'd.
 For this the solemn day was set,
 The auditors in council met. 100

The gran'ry-keeper must explain,
 And balance his account of grain.
 He brought (since he could not refuse 'em)
 Some scraps of paper to amuse 'em.

An honest Pismire, warm with zeal, 105
 In justice to the public weal,
 Thus spoke : The nation's hoard is low,
 From whence doth this profusion flow ?
 I know our annual fund's amount.
 Why such expense, and where 's th' account ? 110

With wonted arrogance and pride,
 The Ant in office thus replied :
 Consider, Sirs, were secrets told,
 How could the best-schemed projects hold ?
 Should we state-mysteries disclose, 115
 'Twould lay us open to our foes.
 My duty and my well-known zeal
 Bid me our present schemes conceal.

But, on my honour, all th' expense
'Though vast) was for the swarm's defence. 120

They pass'd th' account as fair and just,
And voted him implicit trust.

Next year again the gran'ry drain'd,
He thus his innocence maintain'd.

Think how our present matters stand, 125
What dangers threat from ev'ry hand ;
What hosts of turkeys stroll for food,
No farmer's wife but hath her brood.

Consider, when invasion's near,
Intelligence must cost us dear ; 130
And, in this ticklish situation,
A secret told betrays the nation.

But, on my honour, all th' expense
(Though vast) was for the swarm's defence.

Again, without examination, 135
They thank'd his sage administration.

The year revolves. Their treasure spent,
Again in secret service went.

His honour too again was pledged,
To satisfy the charge alleged. 140

When thus, with panic shame possess'd,
An auditor his friends address'd :

What are we? Ministerial tools!
We little knaves are greater fools.
At last this secret is explored ; 145
'Tis our corruption thins the hoard.

For ev'ry grain we touch'd, at least
A thousand his own heaps increased.
Then, for his kin, and fav'rite spies,
A hundred hardly could suffice. 150

Thus, for a paltry, sneaking bribe,
 We cheat ourselves, and all the tribe ;
 For all the magazine contains,
 Grows from our annual toil and pains.

They vote th' account shall be inspected ; 155
 The cunning plund'rer is detected ;
 The fraud is sentenced ; and his hoard,
 As due, to public use restored.

FABLE V

THE BEAR IN A BOAT

To a Coxcomb

THAT man must daily wiser grow,
 Whose search is bent himself to know ;
 Impartially he weighs his scope,
 And on firm reason founds his hope ;
 He tries his strength before the race, 5
 And never seeks his own disgrace ;
 He knows the compass, sail, and oar,
 Or never launches from the shore ;
 Before he builds, computes the cost ;
 And in no proud pursuit is lost : 10
 He learns the bounds of human sense,
 And safely walks within the fence.
 Thus, conscious of his own defect,
 Are pride and self-importance check'd.
 If then, self-knowledge to pursue, 15
 Direct our life in ev'ry view,

Of all the fools that pride can boast,
A Coxcomb claims distinction most.

Coxcombs are of all ranks and kind ;
They're not to sex or age confined, 20
Or rich, or poor, or great, or small,
And vanity besots 'em all.

By ignorance is pride increased :
Those most assume who know the least ;
Their own false balance gives 'em weight, 25
But ev'ry other finds 'em light.

Not that all coxcombs' follies strike,
And draw our ridicule alike ;
To diff'rent merits each pretends.
This in love vanity transcends ; 30
That smitten with his face and shape,
By dress distinguishes the ape ;
T'other with learning crams his shelf,
Knows books, and all things but himself.

All these are fools of low condition, 35
Compared with Coxcombs of ambition.
For those, puff'd up with flatt'ry, dare
Assume a nation's various care.

They ne'er the grossest praise mistrust,
Their sycophants seem hardly just ; 40
For these, in part alone, attest
The flatt'ry their own thoughts suggest.

In this wide sphere a Coxcomb's shown
In other realms beside his own :
The self-deem'd Machiavel at large 45
By turns controls in ev'ry charge.

Does commerce suffer in her rights?
'Tis he directs the naval flights.

What sailor dares dispute his skill?
 He 'll be an adm'ral when he will. 50
 Now meddling in the soldier's trade,
 Troops must be hired, and levies made.
 He gives ambassadors their cue,
 His cobbled treaties to renew ;
 And annual taxes must suffice 55
 The current blunders to disguise.
 When his crude schemes in air are lost,
 And millions scarce defray the cost,
 His arrogance (nought undismay'd)
 Trusting in self-sufficient aid, 60
 On other rocks misguides the realm,
 And thinks a pilot at the helm.
 He ne'er suspects his want of skill,
 But blunders on from ill to ill ;
 And, when he fails of all intent, 65
 Blames only unforeseen event.
 Lest you mistake the application,
 The fable calls me to relation.
 A Bear of shag and manners rough,
 At climbing trees expert enough, 70
 For dext'rously, and safe from harm,
 Year after year he robb'd the swarm :
 Thus, thriving on industrious toil,
 He gloried in his pilfer'd spoil.
 This trick so swell'd him with conceit, 75
 He thought no enterprise too great.
 Alike in sciences and arts,
 He boasted universal parts ;
 Pragmatic, busy, bustling, bold,
 His arrogance was uncontroll'd ; 80

And thus he made his party good,
And grew dictator of the wood.

The beasts with admiration stare,
And think him a prodigious Bear.
Were any common booty got, 85

'Twas his each portion to allot :
For why? he found there might be picking,
Ev'n in the carving of a chicken !
Intruding thus, he by degrees
Claim'd, too, the butcher's larger fees. 90

And now his over-weening pride
In ev'ry province will preside.
No task too difficult was found :
His blund'ring nose misleads the hound.
In stratagem and subtle arts, 95
He overrules the fox's parts.

It chanced, as, on a certain day,
Along the bank he took his way,
A boat, with rudder, sail, and oar,
At anchor floated near the shore. 100
He stopt, and turning to his train,
Thus pertly vents his vaunting strain :

What blund'ring puppies are mankind,
In ev'ry science always blind !
I mock the pedantry of schools. 105
What are their compasses and rules?
From me that helm shall conduct learn,
And man his ignorance discern.

So saying, with audacious pride,
He gains the boat, and climbs the side. 110
The beasts, astonish'd, lined the strand,
The anchor's weigh'd, he drives from land :

The slack sail shifts from side to side ;
 The boat untrimm'd admits the tide.
 Borne down, adrift, at random toss'd, 115
 His oar breaks short, the rudder's lost.
 The Bear, presuming in his skill,
 Is here and there officious still ;
 Till, striking on the dang'rous sands,
 Aground the shatter'd vessel stands. 120
 To see the bungler thus distress'd,
 The very fishes sneer and jest.
 Ev'n gudgeons join in ridicule,
 To mortify the meddling fool.
 The clam'rous watermen appear ; 125
 Threats, curses, oaths, insult his ear :
 Seized, thrash'd, and chain'd, he's dragg'd to
 land ;
 Derision shouts along the strand.

FABLE VI

THE SQUIRE AND HIS CUR

To a Country Gentleman

THE man of pure and simple heart
 Through life disdains a double part.
 He never needs the screen of lies
 His inward bosom to disguise.
 In vain malicious tongues assail ; 5
 Let envy snarl, let slander rail,

From virtue's shield (secure from wound)
 Their blunted, venom'd shafts rebound.
 So shines his light before mankind,
 His actions prove his honest mind. 10
 If in his country's cause he rise,
 Debating senates to advise,
 Unbribed, unawed, he dares impart
 The honest dictates of his heart.
 No ministerial frown he fears, 15
 But in his virtue perseveres.

But would you play the politician,
 Whose heart's averse to intuition,
 Your lips at all times, nay, your reason
 Must be controll'd by place and season. 20
 What statesman could his power support,
 Were lying tongues forbid the court?
 Did princely ears to truth attend,
 What minister could gain his end?
 How could he raise his tools to place, 25
 And how his honest foes disgrace?

That politician tops his part,
 Who readily can lie with art;
 The man's proficient in his trade,
 His power is strong, his fortune's made. 30
 By that the int'rest of the throne
 Is made subservient to his own:
 By that, have kings of old, deluded,
 All their own friends for his excluded.
 By that, his selfish schemes pursuing, 35
 He thrives upon the public ruin.

Antiochus, with hardy pace,
 Provoked the dangers of the chase;

And, lost, from all his menial train,
 Traversed the wood and pathless plain. 40
 A cottage lodged the royal guest !
 The Parthian clown brought forth his best.
 The king, unknown, his feast enjoy'd,
 And various chat the hours employ'd.
 From wine what sudden friendship springs ! 45
 Frankly they talk'd of courts and kings.
 We country-folks (the Clown replies)
 Could ope our gracious monarch's eyes.
 The king (as all our neighbours say),
 Might he (God bless him !) have his way, 50
 Is sound at heart, and means our good,
 And he would do it, if he could.
 If truth in courts were not forbid,
 Nor kings nor subjects would be rid.
 Were he in power, we need not doubt him ; 55
 But, that transferr'd to those about him,
 On them he throws the regal cares ;
 And what mind they? Their own affairs.
 If such rapacious hands he trust,
 The best of men may seem unjust. 60
 From kings to cobblers 'tis the same ;
 Bad servants wound their master's fame.
 In this our neighbours all agree :
 Would the king knew as much as we ?
 Here he stopped short. Repose they sought, 65
 The peasant slept, the monarch thought.
 The courtiers learn'd, at early dawn,
 Where their lost sov'reign was withdrawn.
 The guards' approach our host alarms ;
 With gaudy coats the cottage swarms, 70

The crown and purple robes they bring,
 And prostrate fall before the king.
 The clown was call'd, the royal guest
 By due reward his thanks express'd.
 The king then, turning to the crowd, 75
 Who fawningly before him bow'd,
 Thus spoke : Since, bent on private gain,
 Your counsels first misled my reign,
 Taught and inform'd by you alone,
 No truth the royal ear hath known, 80
 Till here conversing. Hence, ye crew,
 For now I know myself and you.

Whene'er the royal ear's engross'd,
 State-lies but little genius cost.
 The fav'rite then securely robs, 85
 And gleans a nation by his jobs.
 Franker and bolder grown in ill,
 He daily poisons dares instil ;
 And, as his present views suggest,
 Inflames or soothes the royal breast. 90
 Thus wicked ministers oppress,
 When oft the monarch means redress.

Would kings their private subjects hear,
 A minister must talk with fear.
 If honesty opposed his views, 95
 He dared not innocence accuse ;
 'Twould keep him in such narrow bound,
 He could not right and wrong confound.
 Happy were kings, could they disclose
 Their real friends and real foes ! 100
 Were both themselves and subjects known,
 A monarch's will might be his own.

Had he the use of ears and eyes,
 Knaves would no more be counted wise
 But then a minister might lose 105
 (Hard case !) his own ambitious views.
 When such as these have vex'd a state,
 Pursued by universal hate,
 Their false support at once hath fail'd,
 And persevering truth prevail'd. 110
 Exposed their train of fraud is seen ;
 Truth will at last remove the screen.

A country Squire, by whim directed,
 The true staunch dogs of chase neglected.
 Beneath his board no hound was fed, 115
 His hand ne'er stroked the spaniel's head.
 A snappish Cur, alone caress'd,
 By lies had banish'd all the rest.
 Yap had his ear ; and defamation
 Gave him full scope of conversation. 120
 His sycophants must be preferr'd,
 Room must be made for all his herd :
 Wherefore, to bring his schemes about,
 Old faithful servants all must out.

The Cur on ev'ry creature flew 125
 (As other great men's puppies do),
 Unless due court to him were shown,
 And both their face and bus'ness known.
 No honest tongue an audience found ;
 He worried all the tenants round ; 130
 For why ? he lived in constant fear,
 Lest truth, by chance, should interfere.
 If any stranger dared intrude,
 The noisy Cur his heels pursued,

Now fierce with rage, now struck with dread, 135
At once he snarl'd, [he] bit, and fled.

Aloof he bays, with bristling hair,
And thus in secret growls his fear :
Who knows but truth, in this disguise,
May frustrate my best-guarded lies ? 140
Should she (thus mask'd) admittance find,
That very hour my ruin 's sign'd.

Now, in his howl's continued sound,
Their words were lost, their voice was drown'd.
Ever in a we of honest tongues, 145
Thus ev'ry day he strain'd his lungs.

It happen'd, in ill-omen'd hour,
That Yap, unmindful of his power,
Forsook his post, to love inclined ;
A fav'rite bitch was in the wind. 150
By her seduced, in am'rous play,
They frisk'd the joyous hours away.
Thus, by untimely love pursuing,
Like Antony, he sought his ruin.

For now the 'Squire, unvez'd with noise, 155
An honest neighbour's chat enjoys.
Be free (says he), your mind impart ;
I love a friendly open heart.
Methinks my tenants shun my gate ;
Why such a stranger grown of late ? 160
Pray tell me what offence they find :
'Tis plain they 're not so well inclined.

Turn off your Cur (the farmer cries),
Who feeds your ears with daily lies.
His snarling insolence offends ; 165
'Tis he that keeps you from your friends.

Were but that saucy puppy check'd,
 You 'd find again the same respect.
 Hear only him, he'll swear it too,
 That all our hatred is to you. 170
 But learn from us your true estate ;
 'Tis that curs'd Cur alone we hate.
 The 'Squire heard truth. Now Yap rush'd in ;
 The wide hall echoes with his din :
 Yet truth prevail'd ; and, with disgrace, 175
 The Dog was cudgell'd out of place.

FABLE VII

THE COUNTRYMAN AND JUPITER

To Myself

HAVE you a friend (look round and spy)
 So fond, so prepossess'd as I ?
 Your faults, so obvious to mankind,
 My partial eyes could never find.
 When by the breath of fortune blown 5
 Your airy castles were o'erthrown ;
 Have I been over-prone to blame,
 Or mortified your hours with shame ?
 Was I e'er known to damp your spirit,
 Or twit you with the want of merit ? 10
 'Tis not so strange, that fortune's frown
 Still perseveres to keep you down.
 Look round, and see what others do.
 Would you be rich and honest too ?

- Have you (like those she raised to place) 15
 Been opportunely mean and base ?
 Have you (as times required) resign'd
 Truth, honour, virtue, peace of mind ?
 If these are scruples, give her o'er ;
 Write, practise morals, and be poor. 20
 The gifts of fortune truly rate,
 Then tell me what would mend your state.
 If happiness on wealth were built,
 Rich rogues might comfort find in guilt ;
 As grows the miser's hoarded store, 25
 His fears, his wants, increase the more.
 Think, Gay (what ne'er may be the case),
 Should fortune take you into grace,
 Would that your happiness augment ?
 What can she give beyond content ? 30
 Suppose yourself a wealthy heir,
 With a vast annual income clear !
 In all the affluence you possess,
 You might not feel one care the less.
 Might you not then (like others) find 35
 With change of fortune, change of mind ?
 Perhaps, profuse beyond all rule,
 You might start out a glaring fool ;
 Your luxury might break all bounds :
 Plate, table, horses, stewards, hounds, 40
 Might swell your debts : then lust of play
 No regal income can defray.
 Sunk is all credit, writs assail,
 And doom your future life to jail.
 Or were you dignified with power, 45
 Would that avert one pensive hour ?

You might give avarice its swing,
 Defraud a nation, blind a king ;
 Then, from the hirelings in your cause,
 Though daily fed with false applause, 50
 Could it a real joy impart ?
 Great guilt knew never joy at heart.

Is happiness your point in view ?
 (I mean the intrinsic and the true)
 She nor in camps or courts resides, 55
 Nor in the humble cottage hides ;
 Yet found alike in ev'ry sphere,
 Who finds content, will find her there.

O'erspent with toil, beneath the shade,
 A Peasant rested on his spade. 60
 Good gods ! he cries, 'tis hard to bear
 This load of life from year to year.
 Soon as the morning streaks the skies,
 Industrious labour bids me rise ;
 With sweat I earn my homely fair, 65
 And ev'ry day renews my care.

Jove heard the discontented strain,
 And thus rebuked the murm'ring swain :
 Speak out your wants then, honest friend :
 Unjust complaints the gods offend. 70
 If you repine at partial fate,
 Instruct me what could mend your state.*
 Mankind in ev'ry station see.
 What wish you ? Tell me what you 'd be.

So said, upborne upon a cloud, 75
 The clown survey'd the anxious crowd.

Yon face of care, says Jove, behold :
 His bulky bags are fill'd with gold.

See with what joy he counts it o'er !
That sum to-day hath swell'd his store. 80

Were I that man (the Peasant cried),
What blessing could I ask beside ?

Hold, says the god ; first learn to know
True happiness from outward show.

This optic glass of intuition— 85
Here, take it, view his true condition.

He look'd, and saw the miser's breast,
A troubled ocean ne'er at rest ;
Want ever stares him in the face,
And fear anticipates disgrace : 90

With conscious guilt he saw him start ;
Extortion gnaws his throbbing heart ;
And never, or in thought or dream,
His breast admits one happy gleam.

May Jove, he cries, reject my prayer, 95
And guard my life from guilt and care,
My soul abhors that wretch's fate.

O keep me in my humble state !
But see, amidst a gaudy crowd,
Yon minister, so gay and proud, 100
On him what happiness attends,

Who thus rewards his grateful friends !
First take the glass, the god replies :
Man views the world with partial eyes.

Good gods ! exclaims the startled wight, 105
Defend me from this hideous sight !

Corruption, with corrosive smart,
Lies cank'ring on his guilty heart :
I see him, with polluted hand,
Spread the contagion o'er the land. 110

Now av'rice with insatiate jaws,
 Now rapine with her harpy claws,
 His bosom tears. His conscious breast
 Groans with a load of crimes oppress'd.
 See him, mad and drunk with power, 115
 Stand tott'ring on ambition's tower.
 Sometimes, in speeches vain and proud,
 His boasts insult the nether crowd ;
 Now, seized with giddiness and fear,
 He trembles lest his fall is near. 120

Was ever wretch like this ! he cries,
 Such misery in such disguise !
 The change, O Jove, I disavow ;
 Still be my lot the spade and plough.

He next, confirm'd by speculation, 125
 Rejects the lawyer's occupation ;
 For he the statesman seem'd in part,
 And bore similitude of heart.
 Nor did the soldier's trade inflame
 His hopes with thirst of spoil and fame ; 130
 The mis'ries of war he mourn'd :
 Whole nations into deserts turn'd.
 By these have laws and rights been braved ;
 By these was free-born man enslaved :
 When battles and invasion cease, 135
 Why swarm they in the lands of peace ?
 Such change (says he) may I decline ;
 The scythe and civil arms be mine !

Thus, weighing life in each condition,
 The Clown withdrew his rash petition. 140

When thus the god : How mortals err !
 If you true happiness prefer,

'Tis to no rank of life confin'd,
 But dwells in ev'ry honest mind.
 Be justice then your sole pursuit : 145
 Plant virtue, and content 's the fruit.
 So Jove, to gratify the Clown,
 Where first he found him set him down.

FABLE VIII

THE MAN, THE CAT, THE DOG, AND THE FLY

To my Native Country

HAIL, happy land, whose fertile grounds
 The liquid fence of Neptune bounds ;
 By bounteous Nature set apart,
 The seat of industry and art !
 O Britain ! chosen port of trade, 5
 May luxury ne'er thy sons invade ;
 May never minister (intent
 His private treasures to augment)
 Corrupt thy state. If jealous foes
 Thy rights of commerce dare oppose, 10
 Shall not thy fleets their rapine awe ?
 Who is 't prescribes the ocean law ?
 Whenever neighb'ring states contend,
 'Tis thine to be the gen'ral friend.
 What is 't who rules in other lands ? 15
 On trade alone thy glory stands.

That benefit is unconfined,
 Diffusing good among mankind :
 That first gave lustre to thy reigns,
 And scatter'd plenty o'er thy plains : 20
 'Tis that alone thy wealth supplies,
 And draws all Europe's envious eyes.
 Be commerce, then, thy sole design ;
 Keep that, and all the world is thine.

When naval traffic ploughs the main, 25
 Who shares not in the merchant's gain ?
 'Tis that supports the regal state,
 And makes the farmer's heart elate ;
 The num'rous flocks, that clothe the land,
 Can scarce supply the loom's demand ; 30
 Prolific culture glads the fields,
 And the bare heath a harvest yields.

Nature expects mankind should share
 The duties of the public care.
 Who's born for sloth? To some we find 35
 The ploughshare's annual toil assign'd.
 Some at the sounding anvil glow,
 Some the swift-sliding shuttle throw ;
 Some, studious of the wind and tide,
 From pole to pole our commerce guide ; 40
 Some (taught by industry) impart
 With hands and feet the works of art ;
 While some, of genius more refined,
 With head and tongue assist mankind ;
 Each, aiming at one common end, 45
 Proves to the whole a needful friend.
 Thus, born each other's useful aid,
 By turns are obligations paid.

The monarch, when his table's spread,
 Is to the clown obliged for bread ; 50
 And when in all his glory drest,
 Owes to the loom his royal vest ;
 Do not the mason's toil and care
 Protect him from th' inclement air ?
 Does not the cutler's art supply 55
 The ornament that guards his thigh ?
 All these, in duty, to the throne
 Their common obligations own.
 'Tis he (his own and people's cause)
 Protects their properties and laws. 60
 Thus they their honest toil employ,
 And with content the fruits enjoy.
 In ev'ry rank, or great or small,
 'Tis industry supports us all.

The animals by want oppress'd, 65
 To man their services address'd ;
 While each pursued their selfish good,
 They hunger'd for precarious food.
 Their hours with anxious cares were vex'd ;
 One day they fed, and starved the next. 70
 They saw that plenty, sure and rife,
 Was found alone in social life ;
 That mutual industry profess'd,
 The various wants of man redress'd.

The Cat, half-famish'd, lean and weak, 75
 Demands the privilege to speak.

Well, Puss (says Man), and what can you
 To benefit the public do ?

The Cat replies : These teeth, these claws,
 With vigilance shall serve the cause. 80

The mouse, destroy'd by my pursuit,
 No longer shall your feasts pollute ;
 Nor rats, from nightly ambuscade,
 With wasteful teeth your stores invade.

I grant, says Man, to gen'ral use 85
 Your parts and talents may conduce ;
 For rats and mice purloin our grain,
 And threshers whirl the flail in vain.
 Thus shall the Cat, a foe to spoil,
 Protect the farmer's honest toil. 90

Then turning to the Dog, he cried,
 Well, sir ; be next your merits tried.

Sir, says the Dog, by self-applause
 We seem to own a friendless cause.
 Ask those who know me, if distrust 95
 E'er found me treach'rous or unjust.
 Did I e'er faith or friendship break ?
 Ask all those creatures ; let them speak.
 My vigilance and trusty zeal
 Perhaps might serve the public weal. 100
 Might not your flocks in safety feed,
 Were I to guard the fleecy breed ?
 Did I the nightly watches keep,
 Could thieves invade you while you sleep ?

The Man replies : 'Tis just and right, 105
 Rewards such service should requite.
 So rare, in property, we find
 Trust uncorrupt among mankind ;
 That, taken, in a public view,
 The first distinction is your due. 110
 Such merits all reward transcend ;
 Be then my comrade and my friend,

Addressing now the Fly : From you
What public service can accrue ?

From me ! (the flutt'ring insect said) 115
I thought you knew me better bred.

Sir, I 'm a gentleman. Is't fit
That I to industry submit ?

Let mean mechanics, to be fed,
By bus'ness earn ignoble bread. 120

Lost in excess of daily joys,
No thought, no care, my life annoys.

At noon (the lady's matin hour)
I sip the tea's delicious flower.

On cates luxuriously I dine, 125
And drink the fragrance of the vine.

Studious of elegance and ease,
Myself alone I seek to please.

The Man his pert conceit derides,
And thus the useless coxcomb chides : 130

Hence, from that peach, that downy seat ;
No idle fool deserves to eat.

Could you have sapp'd the blushing rind,
And on that pulp ambrosial dined,

Had not some hand, with skill and toil, 135
To raise the tree, prepared the soil ?

Consider, sot, what would ensue,
Were all such worthless things as you.

You 'd soon be forced (by hunger stung)
To make your dirty meals on dung ; 140

On which such despicable need,
Unpitied, is reduced to feed ;

Besides, vain selfish insect, learn
(If you can right and wrong discern).

That he, who with industrious zeal, 145
 Contributes to the public weal,
 By adding to the common good,
 His own hath rightly understood.
 So saying, with a sudden blow,
 He laid the noxious vagrant low. 150
 Crush'd in his luxury and pride,
 The spunger on the public died.

FABLE IX

THE JACKAL, LEOPARD, AND OTHER BEASTS

To a Modern Politician

I GRANT corruption sways mankind ;
 That int'rest, too, perverts the mind ;
 That bribes have blinded common sense,
 Foil'd reason, truth, and eloquence ;
 I grant you, too, our present crimes 5
 Can equal those of former times.
 Against plain facts shall I engage,
 To vindicate our righteous age ?
 I know, that in a modern fist,
 Bribes in full energy subsist. 10
 Since, then, these arguments prevail,
 And itching palms are still so frail,
 Hence politicians, you suggest,
 Should drive the nail that goes the best ;
 That it shows parts and penetration 15
 To ply men with the right temptation.

To this I humbly must dissent,
Premising no reflection's meant.

Does justice, or the client's sense,
Teach lawyers either side's defence? 20

The fee gives eloquence its spirit;
That only is the client's merit.

Does art, wit, wisdom, or address,
Obtain the prostitute's caress?

The guinea (as in other trades)
From ev'ry hand alike persuades. 25

Man, Scripture says, is prone to evil;
But does that vindicate the devil?

Besides, the more mankind are prone,
The less the devil's parts are shown. 30

Corruption's not of modern date,
It hath been tried in ev'ry state.

Great knaves of old their power have fenced,
By places, pensions, bribes, dispensed;

By these they gloried in success,
And impudently dared oppress; 35

By these despotic'ly they sway'd,
And slaves extoll'd the hand that paid;

Nor parts, nor genius were employ'd,
By these alone were realms destroy'd. 40

Now see these wretches in disgrace,
Stript of their treasures, power, and place;

View 'em abandon'd and forlorn,
Exposed to just reproach and scorn.

What now is all your pride, your boast? 45
Where are your slaves, your flatt'ring host?

What tongues now feed you with applause?
Where are the champions of your cause?

Now ev'n that very fawning train
 Which shared the gleanings of your gain, 50
 Press foremost who shall first accuse
 Your selfish jobs, your paltry views,
 Your narrow schemes, your breach of trust,
 And want of talents to be just.

What fools were these amidst their power ? 55
 How thoughtless of their adverse hour !
 What friends were made ? A hireling herd,
 For temporary votes preferr'd.
 Was it, these sycophants to get,
 Your bounty swell'd a nation's debt ? 60
 You're bit. For these, like Swiss, attend ;
 No longer pay, no longer friend.

The Lion is (beyond dispute)
 Allow'd the most majestic brute ;
 His valour and his gen'rous mind 65
 Prove him superior of his kind.
 Yet to Jackals (as 'tis averr'd)
 Some Lions have their power transferr'd ;
 As if the parts of pimps and spies
 To govern forests could suffice. 70

Once, studious of his private good,
 A proud Jackal oppress'd the wood ;
 To cram his own insatiate jaws,
 Invaded property and laws.
 The forest groans with discontent, 75
 Fresh wrongs the gen'ral hate foment ;
 The spreading murmurs reach'd his ear ;
 His secret hours were vex'd with fear.
 Night after night he weighs the case,
 And feels the terrors of disgrace. 80

By friends (says he) I'll guard my seat,
 By those, malicious tongues defeat ;
 I'll strengthen power by new allies,
 And all my clam'rous foes despise.

To make the gen'rous beasts his friends, 85
 He cringes, fawns, and condescends ;
 But those repulsed his abject court,
 And scorn'd oppression to support.
 Friends must be had. He can't subsist.
 Bribes shall new proselytes enlist. 90
 But these nought weigh'd in honest paws ;
 For bribes confess a wicked cause.
 Yet think not ev'ry paw withstands
 What had prevail'd in human hands.

A tempting turnip's silver skin 95
 Drew a base hog through thick and thin :
 Bought with a stag's delicious haunch,
 The mercenary wolf was staunch ;
 The convert fox grew warm and hearty,
 A pullet gain'd him to the party : 100
 The golden pippin in his fist,
 A chatt'ring monkey join'd the list.

But soon exposed to public hate,
 The fav'rite's fall redress'd the state.
 The Leopard, vindicating right, 105
 Had brought his secret frauds to light.
 As rats, before the mansion falls,
 Desert late hospitable walls ;
 In shoals the servile creatures run,
 To bow before the rising sun. 110

The hog with warmth express'd his zeal, —
 And was for hanging those that steal ;

But hoped, though low, the public hoard
 Might half a turnip still afford.
 Since saving measures were profess'd, 115
 A lamb's head was the wolf's request.
 The fox submitted if to touch
 A gosling would be deem'd too much.
 The monkey thought his grin and chatter
 Might ask a nut or some such matter. 120
 Ye hirelings, hence ! the Leopard cries ;
 Your venal conscience I despise.
 He who the public good intends,
 By bribes needs never purchase friends.
 Who acts this just, this open part, 125
 Is propp'd by ev'ry honest heart.
 Corruption now too late hath show'd,
 That bribes are always ill bestow'd ;
 By you your bubbled master's taught,
 Time-serving tools, not friends, are bought. 130

FABLE X

THE DEGENERATE BEES

To the Reverend Dr. Swift, Dean of St. Patrick's

THOUGH courts the practice disallow,
 A friend at all times I 'll avow.
 In politics I know 'tis wrong :
 A friendship may be kept too long ;
 And what they call the prudent part, 5
 Is to wear int'rest next the heart.
 As the times take a different face,
 Old friendships should to new give place.

I know, too, you have many foes,
 That owning you is sharing those ; 10
 That ev'ry knave in ev'ry station,
 Of high and low denomination.
 For what you speak, and what you write,
 Dread you at once, and bear you spite.
 Such freedoms in your works are shown, 15
 They can't enjoy what 's not their own.
 All dunces, too, in church and state,
 In frothy nonsense show their hate ;
 With all the petty scribbling crew
 (And those pert sots are not a few), 20
 'Gainst you and Pope their envy spurt—
 The booksellers alone are hurt.

Good gods ! by what a powerful race
 (For blockheads may have power and place)
 Are scandals raised and libels writ, 25
 To prove your honesty and wit !
 Think with yourself : Those worthy men,
 You know, have suffer'd by your pen ;
 From them you 've nothing but your due,
 From hence, 'tis plain, your friends are few.
 Except myself, I know of none, 30
 Besides the wise and good alone.
 To set the case in fairer light,
 My fable shall the rest recite ;
 Which (though unlike our present state)
 I for the moral's sake relate. 35

A Bee of cunning, not of parts,
 Luxurious, negligent of arts,
 Rapacious, arrogant, and vain,
 Greedy of power, but more of gain ;

Corruption sow'd throughout the hive— 40
 By petty rogues the great ones thrive.
 As power and wealth his views supplied,
 'Twas seen in overbearing pride.
 With him loud impudence had merit,
 The Bee of conscience wanted spirit ; 45
 And those who follow'd honour's rules
 Were laugh'd to scorn for squeamish fools.
 Wealth claim'd distinction, favour, grace,
 And poverty alone was base.
 He treated industry with slight, 50
 Unless he found his profit by 't.
 Rights, laws, and liberties give way,
 To bring his selfish schemes in play.
 The swarm forgot the common toil,
 To share the gleanings of his spoil. 55
 While vulgar souls of narrow parts
 Waste life in low mechanic arts ;
 Let us (says he) to genius born,
 The drudg'ry of our fathers scorn.
 The wasp and drone, you must agree, 60
 Live with more elegance than we.
 Like gentlemen they sport and play,
 No business interrupts the day ;
 Their hours to luxury they give,
 And nobly on their neighbours live. 65
 A stubborn Bee, among the swarm,
 With honest indignation warm,
 Thus from his cell with zeal replied :
 I slight thy frowns, and hate thy pride.
 The laws our native rights protect ; 70
 Offending thee, I those respect.

Shall luxury corrupt the hive,
 And none against the torrent strive ?
 Exert the honour of your race ;
 He builds his rise on your disgrace. 75
 'Tis industry our state maintains :
 'Twas honest toils and honest gains
 That raised our sires to power and fame.
 Be virtuous ; save yourselves from shame.
 Know, that in selfish ends pursuing, 80
 You scramble for the public ruin.
 He spoke ; and, from his cell dismiss'd,
 Was insolently scoff'd and hiss'd.
 With him a friend or two resign'd,
 Disdaining the degen'rate kind. 85
 These drones (says he), these insects vile
 (I treat them in their proper style),
 May for a time oppress the state,
 They own our virtue by their hate ;
 By that our merits they reveal, 90
 And recommend our public zeal ;
 Disgraced by this corrupted crew,
 We 're honour'd by the virtuous few.

FABLE XI

THE PACK-HORSE AND THE CARRIER

To a Young Nobleman

BEGIN, my lord, in early youth,
 To suffer, nay, encourage truth ;

And blame me not for disrespect,
 If I the flatt'ers style reject ;
 With that, by menial tongues supplied, 5
 You 're daily cocker'd up in pride.

The tree 's distinguish'd by the fruit,
 Be virtue, then, your sole pursuit ;
 Set your great ancestors in view,
 Like them deserve the title too ; 10
 Like them ignoble actions scorn,
 Let virtue prove you greatly born.

Though with less plate their sideboard shone,
 Their conscience always was their own ;
 They ne'er at levees meanly fawn'd, 15
 Nor was their honour yearly pawn'd ;
 Their hands, by no corruption stain'd,
 The ministerial bribe disdain'd ;
 They served the crown with loyal zeal ;
 Yet, jealous of the public weal, 20
 They stood the bulwark of our laws,
 And wore at heart their country's cause ;
 By neither place or pension bought,
 They spoke and voted as they thought.
 Thus did your sires adorn their seat, 25
 And such alone are truly great.

If you the paths of learning slight,
 You 're but a dunce in stronger light ;
 In foremost rank the coward placed,
 Is more conspicuously disgraced. 30
 If you, to serve a paltry end,
 To knavish jobs can condescend ;
 We pay you the contempt that 's due,
 In that you have precedence too.

Whence had you this illustrious name? 35

From virtue and unblemish'd fame.

By birth the name alone descends,

Your honour on yourself depends ;

Think not your coronet can hide

Assuming ignorance and pride. 40

Learning by study must be won,

'Twas ne'er entail'd from son to son.

Superior worth your rank requires,

For that mankind reveres your sires ;

If you degen'rate from your race, 45

Their merits heighten your disgrace.

A Carrier, ev'ry night and morn,

Would see his horses eat their corn ;

This sunk the ostler's vails, 'tis true,

But, then, his horses had their due. 50

Were we so cautious in all cases,

Small gain would rise from greater places.

The manger now had all its measure ;

He heard the grinding teeth with pleasure ;

When all at once confusion rung : 55

They snorted, jostled, bit, and flung.

A Pack-horse turn'd his head aside,

Foaming, his eyeballs swell'd with pride :

Good gods ! (says he) how hard's my lot !

Is, then, my high descent forgot? 60

Reduced to drudg'ry and disgrace

(A life unworthy of my race),

Must I, too, bear the vile attacks

Of ragged scrubs and vulgar hacks ?

See scurvy Roan, that brute ill-bred, 65

Dares from the manger thrust my head !

Shall I, who boast a noble line,
 On offals of those creatures dine?
 Kick'd by old Ball ! so mean a foe !
 My honour suffers by the blow. 70
 Newmarket speaks my grandsire's fame,
 All jockeys still revere his name ;
 There yearly are his triumphs told,
 There all his massy plates enroll'd.
 Whene'er led forth upon the plain, 75
 You saw him with a liv'ry train ;
 Returning, too, with laurels crown'd,
 You heard the drums and trumpets sound.
 Let it then, Sir, be understood,
 Respect 's my due ; for I have blood. 80
 Vain-glorious fool ! (the Carrier cried),
 Respect was never paid to pride.
 Know 'twas thy giddy, wilful heart
 Reduced thee to this slavish part.
 Did not thy headstrong youth disdain 85
 To learn the conduct of the rein ?
 Thus coxcombs, blind to real merits,
 In vicious frolics fancy spirit.
 What is 't to me by whom begot,
 Thou restive, pert, conceited sot ? 90
 Your sires I reverence ; 'tis their due ;
 But, worthless fool, what 's that to you ?
 Ask all the Carriers on the road,
 They 'll say thy keeping 's ill bestow'd.
 Then vaunt no more thy noble race, 95
 That neither mends thy strength or pace.
 What profits me thy boast of blood ?
 An ass hath more intrinsic good.

By outward show let's not be cheated ;
 An ass should like an ass be treated. 100

FABLE XII

PAN AND FORTUNE

To a Young Heir

SOON as your father's death was known
 (As if th' estate had been their own),
 The gamesters outwardly express'd
 The decent joy within your breast.
 So lavish in your praise they grew, 5
 As spoke their certain hopes in you.

One counts your income of the year,
 How much in ready-money clear.
 No house, says he, is more complete ;
 The garden's elegant and great. 10
 How fine the park around it lies,
 The timber 's of a noble size !
 Then count his jewels and his plate,
 Besides, 'tis no entail'd estate.
 If cash run low, his lands in fee 15
 Are, or for sale, or mortgage free.

Thus they, before you threw the main,
 Seem to anticipate their gain.

Would you, when thieves were known abroad,
 Bring forth your treasures in the road ? 20
 Would not the fool abet the stealth,
 Who rashly thus exposed his wealth ?

Yet this you do whene'er you play
Among the gentlemen of prey.

Could fools to keep their own contrive, 25
On what, on whom could gamesters thrive?
Is it in charity you game,
To save your worthy gang from shame?
Unless you furnish'd daily bread,
Which way could idleness be fed? 30
Could these professors of deceit
Within the law no longer cheat,
They must run bolder risks for prey,
And strip the trav'ler on the way.
Thus in your annual rents they share, 35
And 'scape the noose from year to year.

Consider, ere you make the bet,
That sum might cross your tailor's debt.
When you the pilf'ring rattle shake,
Is not your honour too at stake? 40
Must you not by mean lies evade
To-morrow's duns from ev'ry trade?
By promises so often paid,
Is yet your tailor's bill defray'd?
Must you not pitifully fawn, 45
To have your butcher's writ withdrawn?
This must be done. In debts of play
Your honour suffers no delay;
And not this year's and next year's rent
The sons of rapine can content. 50

Look round. The wrecks of play behold,
Estates dismember'd, mortgaged, sold!
Their owners, now to jails confined,
Show equal poverty of mind.

- Some, who the spoil of knaves were made, 55
 Too late attempt to learn their trade.
 Some, for the folly of one hour,
 Become the dirty tools of power,
 And, with the mercenary list,
 Upon court-charity subsist. 60
 You'll find at last this maxim true,
 Fools are the game which knaves pursue.
 The forest (a whole cent'ry's shade)
 Must be one wasteful ruin made.
 No mercy's shown to age or kind ; 65
 The general massacre is sign'd.
 The park, too, shares the dreadful fate,
 For duns grow louder at the gate ;
 Stern clowns, obedient to the Squire,
 (What will not barb'rous hands for hire?) 70
 With brawny arms repeat the stoke,
 Fall'n are the elm and rev'rend oak.
 Through the long wood loud axes sound,
 And echo groans with ev'ry wound.
 To see the desolation spread,
 Pan drops a tear, and hangs his head : 75
 His bosom now with fury burns,
 Beneath his hoof the dice he spurns.
 Cards, too, in peevish passion torn,
 The sport of whirling winds are borne.
 To snails invet'rate hate I bear, 80
 Who spoil the verdure of the year ;
 The caterpillar I detest,
 The blooming spring's voracious pest ;
 The locust, too, whose rav'nous band
 Spreads sudden famine o'er the land. 85

But what are these? The dice's throw
 At once hath laid a forest low.
 The cards are dealt, the bet is made,
 And the wide park hath lost its shade.
 Thus is my kingdom's pride defaced, 90
 And all its ancient glories waste.
 All this (he cries) is Fortune's doing :
 'Tis thus she meditates my ruin.
 By Fortune, that false, fickle jade,
 More havoc in one hour is made, 95
 Than all the hungry insect race,
 Combined, can in an age deface.
 Fortune, by chance, who near him past,
 O'erheard the vile aspersion cast.
 Why, Pan (says she), what 's all this rant? 100
 'Tis ev'ry country-bubble's cant.
 Am I the patroness of vice?
 Is't I who cog or palm the dice?
 Did I the shuffling art reveal,
 To mark the cards, or range the deal? 105
 In all th' employments men pursue,
 I mind the least what gamesters do.
 There may (if computation 's just)
 One now and then my conduct trust :
 I blame the fool, for what can I, 110
 When ninety-nine my power defy?
 These trust alone their fingers' ends,
 And not one stake on me depends.
 Whene'er the gaming board is set,
 Two classes of mankind are met ; 115
 But if we count the greedy race,
 The knaves fill up the greater space.

'Tis a gross error, held in schools,
 That Fortune always favours fools.
 In play it never bears dispute ; 120
 That doctrine these fell'd oaks confute.
 Then why to me such rancour show ?
 'Tis Folly, Pan, that is thy foe.
 By me his late estate he won,
 But he by Folly was undone. 125

FABLE XIII

PLUTUS, CUPID, AND TIME

OF all the burdens man must bear,
 Time seems most galling and severe :
 Beneath this grievous load oppress'd,
 We daily meet some friend distress'd.
 What can one do ? I rose at nine. 5
 'Tis full six hours before we dine.
 Six hours ! no earthly thing to do !
 Would I had dozed in bed till two.
 A pamphlet is before him spread,
 And almost half a page is read ; 10
 Tired with the study of the day,
 The flutt'ring sheets are toss'd away.
 He opes his snuff-box, hums an air,
 Then yawns, and stretches in his chair.
 Not twenty, by the minute-hand ! 15
 Good gods ! says he, my watch must stand ?
 How muddling 'tis on books to pore !
 I thought I 'd read an hour or more.

The morning, of all hours, I hate.
 One can't contrive to rise too late. 20
 To make the minutes faster run,
 Then, too, his tiresome self to shun,
 To the next coffee-house he speeds,
 Takes up the news, some scraps he reads.
 Saunt'ring, from chair to chair he trails ; 25
 Now drinks his tea, now bites his nails.
 He spies a partner of his woe,
 By chat afflictions lighter grow ;
 Each other's grievances they share,
 And thus their dreadful hours compare. 30
 Says Tom, since all men must confess
 That Time lies heavy more or less ;
 Why should it be so hard to get,
 Till two, a party at piquet ?
 Play might relieve the lagging morn, 35
 By cards long wintry nights are borne ;
 Does not quadrille amuse the fair,
 Night after night, throughout the year ?
 Vapours and spleen forgot, at play
 They cheat uncounted hours away. 40
 My case, says Will, then must be hard,
 By want of skill from play debarr'd.
 Courtiers kill time by various ways,
 Dependence wears out half their days.
 How happy these, whose time ne'er stands ! 45
 Attendance takes it off their hands.
 Were it not for this cursed shower,
 The park had whiled away an hour.
 At court, without or place or view,
 I daily lose an hour or two. 50

It fully answers my design,
When I have pick'd up friends to dine.
The tavern makes our burden light,
Wine puts our time and care to flight
At six (hard case !) they call to pay. 55
Where can one go? I hate the play.
From six till ten! Unless in sleep,
One cannot spend the hours so cheap.
The comedy's no sooner done,
But some assembly is begun; 60
Loit'ring from room to room I stray;
Converse, but nothing hear or say;
Quite tired from fair to fair I roam.
So soon! I dread the thoughts of home.
From thence, to quicken slow-paced night, 65
Again my tavern friends invite;
Here, too, our early mornings pass,
Till drowsy sleep retards the glass.
Thus they their wretched life bemoan,
And make each other's case their own. 70
Consider, friends, no hour rolls on,
But something of your grief is gone.
Were you to schemes of bus'ness bred,
Did you the paths of learning tread,
Your hours, your days, would fly too fast; 75
You'd then regret the minute past.
Time's fugitive and light as wind!
'Tis indolence that clogs your mind!
That load from off your spirits shake;
You'll own and grieve for your mistake
A while your thoughtless spleen suspend
Then read, and (if you can) attend.

As Plutus, to divert his care,
 Walk'd forth one morn to take the air,
 Cupid o'ertook his strutting pace. 85
 Each stared upon the stranger's face,
 'Till recollection set 'em right ;
 For each knew t'other but by sight.
 After some complimentary talk,
 Time met 'em, bow'd, and join'd their walk. 90
 Their chat on various subjects ran,
 But most, what each had done for man.
 Plutus assumes a haughty air,
 Just like our purse-proud fellows here.
 Let kings (says he), let cobblers tell, 95
 Whose gifts among mankind excel.
 Consider courts : What draws their train ?
 Think you 'tis loyalty or gain ?
 That statesman hath the strongest hold,
 Whose tool of politics is gold. 100
 By that in former reigns, 'tis said,
 The knave in power hath senates led,
 By that alone he sway'd debates,
 Enrich'd himself and beggar'd states.
 Forego your boast. You must conclude, 105
 That's most esteem'd that's most pursued.
 Think, too, in what a woeful plight
 That wretch must live whose pocket's light.
 Are not his hours by want deprest ?
 Penurious care corrodes his breast. 110
 Without respect, or love, or friends,
 His solitary day descends.
 You might, says Cupid, doubt my parts,
 My knowledge, too, in human hearts,

Should I the power of gold dispute, 115
 Which great examples might confute.
 I know, when nothing else prevails,
 Persuasive money seldom fails ;
 That beauty too (like other wares)
 Its price, as well as conscience, bears. 120
 Then marriage (as of late profess'd)
 Is but a money-job at best.
 Consent, compliance may be sold :
 But love's beyond the price of gold,
 Smugglers there are, who by retail, 125
 Expose what they call love, to sale,
 Such bargains are an arrant cheat :
 You purchase flatt'ry and deceit.
 Those who true love have ever tried
 (The common cares of life supplied), 130
 No wants endure, no wishes make,
 But ev'ry real joy partake.
 All comfort on themselves depends ;
 They want nor power, nor wealth, nor friends.
 Love, then, hath ev'ry bliss in store : 135
 'Tis friendship, and 'tis something more.
 Each other ev'ry wish they give,
 Not to know love, is not to live.
 Or love, or money (Time replied),
 Were men the question to decide, 140
 Would bear the prize : on both intent,
 My boon's neglected or misspent.
 'Tis I who measure vital space,
 And deal out years to human race.
 Though little prized, and seldom sought ; 145
 Without me love and gold are nought.

How does the miser time employ ?
 Did I e'er see him life enjoy ?
 By me forsook, the hoards he won,
 Are scatter'd by his lavish son. 150
 By me all useful arts are gain'd ;
 Wealth, learning, wisdom is attain'd.
 Who then would think (since such my power)
 That e'er I knew an idle hour ?
 So subtle and so swift I fly, 155
 Love's not more fugitive than I.
 Who hath not heard coquettes complain
 Of days, months, years, misspent in vain ?
 For time misused they pine and waste,
 And love's sweet pleasures never taste. 160
 Those who direct their time aright,
 If love or wealth their hopes excite,
 In each pursuit fit hours employ'd,
 And both by Time have been enjoy'd.
 How heedless, then, are mortals grown ! 165
 How little is their int'rest known !
 In ev'ry view they ought to mind me ;
 For when once lost they never find me.
 He spoke. The gods no more contest,
 And his superior gift confess'd : 170
 That Time when (truly understood)
 Is the most precious earthly good.

FABLE XIV

THE OWL, THE SWAN, THE COCK, THE SPIDER,
THE ASS, AND THE FARMER

To a Mother

CONVERSING with your sprightly boys,
Your eyes have spoke the Mother's joys.
With what delight I've heard you quote
Their sayings in imperfect note !

I grant, in body and in mind,
Nature appears profusely kind. 5

Trust not to that. Act you your part ;
Imprint just morals on their heart,
Impartially their talents scan :
Just education forms the man. 10

Perhaps (their genius yet unknown)
Each lot of life's already thrown ;
That this shall plead, the next shall fight,
The last assert the church's right.

I censure not the fond intent ; 15
But how precarious is th' event !

By talents misapplied and cross'd,
Consider, all your sons are lost.

One day (the tale 's by Martial penn'd)
A father thus address'd his friend : 20

To train my boy, and call forth sense,
You know I've stuck at no expense ;
I've tried him in the sev'ral arts
(The lad, no doubt, hath latent parts),

Yet trying all, he nothing knows ; 25
 But, crab-like, rather backward goes.
 Teach me what yet remains undone ;
 'Tis your advice shall fix my son.

Sir, says the friend, I 've weigh'd the matter ;
 Excuse me, for I scorn to flatter : 30
 Make him (nor think his genius check'd)
 A herald, or an architect.

Perhaps (as commonly 'tis known)
 He heard th' advice, and took his own.

The boy wants wit ; he 's sent to school, 35
 Where learning but improves the fool :
 The college next must give him parts,
 And cram him with the lib'ral arts.
 Whether he blunders at the bar,

Or owes his infamy to war ; 40
 Or if by licence or degree

The sexton shares the doctor's fee :
 Or from the pulpit by the hour
 He weekly floods of nonsense pour ;
 We find (th' intent of nature foil'd) 45
 A tailor or a butcher spoil'd.

Thus ministers have royal boons
 Conferr'd on blockheads and buffoons :
 In spite of nature, merit, wit,
 Their friends for ev'ry post were fit. 50

But now let ev'ry muse confess
 That merit finds its due success.
 Th' examples of our days regard ;
 Where's virtue seen without reward ?
 Distinguish'd and in place you find 55
 Desert and worth of ev'ry kind.

Survey the rev'rend bench, and see,
 Religion, learning, piety !
 The patron, ere he recommends,
 Sees his own image in his friend's. 60
 Is honesty disgraced and poor ?
 What is't to us what was before ?

We of all times corrupt have heard,
 When paltry minions were preferr'd ?
 When all great offices by dozens, 65
 Were fill'd by brothers, sons, and cousins.
 What matter ignorance and pride ?
 The man was happily allied.

Provided that his clerk was good,
 What though he nothing understood ? 70
 In church and state, the sorry race
 Grew more conspicuous fools in place.
 Such heads, as then a treaty made,
 Had bungled in the cobbler's trade.

Consider, patrons, that such elves 75
 Expose your folly with themselves.
 'Tis yours, as 'tis the parent's care,
 To fix each genius in its sphere.
 Your partial hand can wealth dispense,
 But never give a blockhead sense. 80

An Owl of magisterial air,
 Of solemn voice, of brow austere,
 Assumed the pride of human race,
 And bore his wisdom in his face ;
 Not to depreciate learned eyes, 85
 I've seen a pedant look as wise.

Within a barn, from noise retired,
 He scorn'd the world, himself admired ;

And, like an ancient sage, conceal'd
 The follies public life reveal'd. 90
 Philosophers of old, he read,
 Their country's youth to science bred,
 Their manners form'd for ev'ry station,
 And destined each his occupation.
 When Xenophon, by numbers braved, 95
 Retreated, and a people saved,
 That laurel was not all his own ;
 The plant by Socrates was sown.
 To Aristotle's greater name
 The Macedonian owed his fame. 100
 Th' Athenian bird, with pride replete,
 Their talents equall'd in conceit ;
 And, copying the Socratic rule,
 Set up for master of a school.
 Dogmatic jargon learnt by heart, 105
 Trite sentences, hard terms of art,
 To vulgar ears seem'd so profound,
 They fancied learning in the sound.
 The school had fame ; the crowded place 110
 With pupils swarm'd of ev'ry race.
 With these the Swan's maternal care
 Had sent her scarce-fledged cygnet heir :
 The Hen (though fond and loth to part)
 Here lodged the darling of her heart : 115
 The spider, of mechanic kind,
 Aspired to science more refined :
 The Ass learnt metaphors and tropes,
 But most on music fix'd his hopes.
 The pupils, now advanced in age, 120
 Were call'd to tread life's busy stage :

And to the master 'twas submitted,
That each might to his part be fitted.

The Swan (says he) in arms shall shine :
The soldier's glorious toil be thine. 125
The Cock shall mighty wealth attain ;
Go, seek it on the stormy main.

The Court shall be the spider's sphere :
Power, fortune, shall reward him there.
In music's art the Ass's fame 130
Shall emulate Corelli's name.

Each took the part that he advised,
And all were equally despised.
A Farmer, at his folly moved,
The dull preceptor thus reproved. 135

Blockhead (says he), by what you've done,
One would have thought 'em each your son :
For parents, to their offspring blind,
Consult nor parts nor turn of mind ;
But ev'n in infancy decree 140

What this, what t'other son shall be.
Had you with judgment weigh'd the case,
Their genius thus had fix'd their place :
The Swan had learnt the sailor's art ;
The Cock had play'd the soldier's part ; 145
The Spider in the weaver's trade
With credit had a fortune made ;
But, for the foal, in ev'ry class
The blockhead had appear'd an Ass.

FABLE XV

THE COOK-MAID, THE TURNSPIT, AND THE OX

To a Poor Man

CONSIDER man in ev'ry sphere,
 Then tell me is your lot severe?
 'Tis murmur, discontent, distrust,
 That makes you wretched. God is just.

I grant, that hunger must be fed, 5
 That toil, too, earns thy daily bread.
 What then? Thy wants are seen and known,
 But ev'ry mortal feels his own.

We're born a restless needy crew :
 Shew me the happier man than you. 10

Adam, though blest above his kind,
 For want of social woman pined.
 Eve's wants the subtle serpent saw,
 Her fickle taste transgress'd the law :
 Thus fell our sire ; and their disgrace 15
 The curse entail'd on human race.

When Philip's son, by glory led,
 Had o'er the globe his empire spread ;
 When altars to his name were dress'd,
 That he was man, his tears confess'd. 20

The hopes of avarice are check'd :
 The proud man always wants respect.
 What various wants on power attend?
 Ambition never gains its end.

Who hath not heard the rich complain 25
 Of surfeits and corporeal pain ?
 He, barr'd from ev'ry use of wealth,
 Envies the ploughman's strength and health.
 Another in a beauteous wife
 Finds all the miseries of life : 30
 Domestic jars and jealous fear
 Embitter all his days with care.
 This wants an heir, the line is lost :
 Why was that vain entail engross'd ?
 Canst thou discern another's mind ? 35
 What is't you envy ? Envy's blind.
 Tell Envy, when she would annoy,
 That thousands want what you enjoy.
 The dinner must be dish'd at one,
 Where's this vexatious Turnspit gone ? 40
 Unless the skulking Cur is caught,
 The sirloin's spoil'd, and I'm in fault.
 Thus said : (for sure you'll think it fit
 That I the Cook-maid's oaths omit)
 With all the fury of a cook, 45
 Her cooler kitchen Nan forsook.
 The broomstick o'er her head she waves ;
 She sweats, she stamps, she puffs, she raves.
 The sneaking Cur before her flies :
 She whistles, calls ; fair speech she tries. 50
 These nought avail. Her choler burns ;
 The fist and cudgel threat by turns ;
 With hasty stride she presses near ;
 He slinks aloof, and howls with fear.
 Was ever Cur so cursed ! (he cried) 55
 What star did at my birth preside !

Am I for life by compact bound
 To tread the wheel's eternal round ?
 Inglorious task ! Of all our race
 No slave is half so mean and base. 60
 Had fate a kinder lot assign'd,
 And form'd me of the lap-dog kind,
 I then, in higher life employ'd,
 Had indolence and ease enjoy'd ;
 And, like a gentleman, caress'd, 65
 Had been the lady's fav'rite guest.
 Or were I sprung from spaniel line,
 Was his sagacious nostril mine,
 By me, their never-erring guide,
 From wood and plain their feasts supplied, 70
 Knights, squires, attendant on my pace,
 Had shared the pleasures of the chase.
 Endued with native strength and fire,
 Why call'd I not the lion sire ?
 A lion ! such mean views I scorn : 75
 Why was I not of woman born ?
 Who dares with reason's power contend ?
 On man we brutal slaves depend :
 To him all creatures tribute pay,
 And luxury employs his day. 80
 An ox by chance o'erheard his moan,
 And thus rebuked the lazy drone :
 Dare you at partial fate repine ?
 How kind's your lot compared with mine !
 Decreed to toil, the barb'rous knife 85
 Hath sever'd me from social life ;
 Urged by the stimulating goad,
 I drag the cumbrous waggon's load :

'Tis mine to tame the stubborn plain,
 Break the stiff soil, and house the grain : 90
 Yet I without a murmur bear
 The various labours of the year.
 But then consider, that one day
 (Perhaps the hour's not far away),
 You, by the duties of your post, 95
 Shall turn the spit when I'm the roast :
 And for reward shall share the feast,
 I mean, shall pick my bones at least.
 'Till now, the astonish'd Cur replies,
 I look'd on all with envious eyes. 100
 How false we judge by what appears !
 All creatures feel their sev'ral cares.
 If thus yon mighty beast complains,
 Perhaps man knows superior pains.
 Let envy then no more torment : 105
 Think on the Ox, and learn content.
 Thus said : close following at her heel,
 With cheerful heart he mounts the wheel.

FABLE XVI

THE RAVENS, THE SEXTON, AND THE EARTH-WORM

To Laura

LAURA, methinks you're over nice.
 True. Flatt'ry is a shocking vice ;
 Yet sure, whene'er the praise is just,
 One may commend without disgust.

Am I a privilege denied, 5
 Indulged by ev'ry tongue beside ?
 How singular are all your ways !
 A woman, and averse to praise !
 If 'tis offence such truths to tell,
 Why do your merits thus excel ? 10
 Since then I dare not speak my mind,
 A truth conspicuous to mankind ;
 Though in full lustre ev'ry grace
 Distinguish your celestial face :
 Though beauties of inferior ray 15
 (Like stars before the orb of day)
 Turn pale and fade : I check my lays,
 Admiring what I dare not praise.
 If you the tribute due disdain,
 The Muse's mortifying strain 20
 Shall, like a woman, in mere spite,
 Set beauty in a moral light.
 Though such revenge might shock the ear
 Of many a celebrated fair ;
 I mean that superficial race 25
 Whose thoughts ne'er reach beyond their face ;
 What's that to you ? I but displease
 Such ever-girlish ears as these.
 Virtue can brook the thoughts of age,
 That lasts the same through ev'ry stage. 30
 Though you by time must suffer more
 Than ever woman lost before ;
 To age is such indiff'rence shown,
 As if your face were not your own.
 Were you by Antoninus taught ? 35
 Or is it native strength of thought,

That thus, without concern or fright,
You view yourself by reason's light ?

Those eyes of so divine a ray,
What are they? Mould'ring, mortal clay. 40
Those features, cast in heav'nly mould,
Shall, like my coarser earth, grow old ;
Like common grass, the fairest flower
Must feel the hoary season's power.

How weak, how vain is human pride ! 45
Dares man upon himself confide ?
The wretch who glories in his gain,
Amasses heaps on heaps in vain.
Why lose we life in anxious cares,
To lay in hoards for future years ? 50
Can those (when tortured by disease)
Cheer our sick heart, or purchase ease ?
Can those prolong one gasp of breath,
Or calm the troubled hour of death ?

What's beauty? Call ye that your own ? 55
A flower that fades as soon as blown.
What's man in all his boast of sway ?
Perhaps the tyrant of a day.

Alike the laws of life take place
Through ev'ry branch of human race. 60
The monarch of long regal line
Was raised from dust as frail as mine.
Can he pour health into his veins,
Or cool the fever's restless pains ?
Can he (worn down in Nature's course) 65
New-brace his feeble nerves with force ?
Can he (how vain is mortal pow'r !)
Stretch life bevond the destined hour ?

Consider, man ; weigh well thy frame ;
 The king, the beggar is the same. 70
 Dust form'd us all. Each breathes his day,
 Then sinks into his native clay.

Beneath a venerable yew,
 That in the lonely churchyard grew,
 Two Ravens sat. In solemn croak 75
 Thus one his hungry friend bespoke :

Methinks I scent some rich repast ;
 The savour strengthens with the blast ;
 Snuff then, the promised feast inhale ;
 I taste the carcase in the gale. 80
 Near yonder trees, the farmer's steed,
 From toil and ev'ry drudg'ry freed,
 Hath groan'd his last. A dainty treat !
 To birds of taste, delicious meat.

A Sexton, busy at his trade, 85
 To hear their chat suspends his spade.
 Death struck him with no farther thought,
 Than merely as the fees he brought.
 Was ever two such blund'ring fowls,
 In brains and manners less than owls ! 90
 Blockheads, says he, learn more respect ;
 Know ye on whom ye thus reflect ?
 In this same grave (who does me right,
 Must own the work is strong and tight)
 The Squire that yon fair hall possess'd, 95
 To-night shall lay his bones at rest.

Whence could the gross mistake proceed ?
 The Squire was somewhat fat indeed.
 What then ? The meanest bird of prey
 Such want of sense could ne'er betray ; 100

For sure some difference must be found
 (Suppose the smelling organ sound)
 In carcasses (say what we can)
 Or where's the dignity of man ?

With due respect to human race, 105
 The Ravens undertook the case.

In such similitude of scent,
 Man ne'er could think reflections meant.

As epicures extol a treat,
 And seem their sav'ry words to eat, 110
 They praised dead horse, luxurious food,
 The ven'son of the prescient brood.

The Sexton's indignation moved,
 The mean comparison reproved ;
 Their undiscerning palate blamed, 115
 Which two-legg'd carrion thus defamed.

Reproachful speech from either side
 The want of argument supplied :
 They rail, revile : as often ends
 The contest of disputing friends. 120

Hold, says the Fowl ; since human pride
 With confutation ne'er complied,
 Let's state the case, and then refer
 The knotty point : for taste may err.

As thus he spoke, from out the mould 125
 An Earth-worm, huge of size, unroll'd
 His monstrous length. They straight agree
 To choose him as their referee.

So to th' experience of his jaws,
 Each states the merits of his cause. 130

He paused, and with a solemn tone,
 Thus made his sage opinion known :

On carcasses of ev'ry kind
 This maw hath elegantly dined ;
 Provoked by luxury or need, 135
 On beast, or fowl, or man, I feed ;
 Such small distinction's in the savour
 By turns I choose the fancied flavour.
 Yet I must own that human beast,
 A glutton, is the rankest feast. 140
 Man, cease this boast ; for human pride
 Hath various tracts to range beside.
 The prince who kept the world in awe,
 The judge whose dictate fix'd the law,
 The rich, the poor, the great, the small, 145
 Are levell'd. Death confounds 'em all.
 Then think not that we reptiles share
 Such cates, such elegance of fare :
 The only true and real good
 Of man was never vermin's food. 150
 'Tis seated in th' immortal mind ;
 Virtue distinguishes mankind,
 And that (as yet ne'er harbour'd here)
 Mounts with the soul we know not where.
 So, good-man Sexton, since the case 155
 Appears with such a dubious face,
 To neither I the cause determine,
 For diff'rent tastes please diff'rent vermin.

POEMS
FROM 'GAY'S CHAIR'

THE verses which follow cannot with perfect certainty be ascribed to Gay. They were none of them printed in his lifetime ; and the story of their discovery in a secret drawer nearly ninety years after his death is not in the highest degree convincing. A curiously constructed chair, said to have once been the property of the poet, was sold at Barnstaple, his birth-place, among the effects of a relative, early in the present century. It subsequently came into the hands of Henry Lee, who sent it to a local cabinetmaker for repairs. 'On taking out the drawer in front, which was somewhat broken,' relates the tradesman in question (*Gay's Chair*, p. 5), 'I found at the back part of the chair a *concealed drawer*, ingeniously fastened with a small wooden bolt ; . . . it was full of manuscript papers, some of which appeared to have slipped over, as I found them stuck in the bottom or seat of the chair.' Among these 'manuscript papers' were certain poems, which were afterwards published in a small volume, entitled *Gay's Chair. Poems never before printed, written by John Gay . . . With a sketch of his Life from the MSS. of the Rev. Joseph Baller, his nephew. Edited by Henry Lee . . . 1820.* The evidence in support of their authenticity is (1) the fact that they were found in a chair which was always spoken of by Gay's 'immediate descendants' as 'having been the property of the poet, and which, as his favourite easy-chair, he highly valued ;' and (2) that *The Ladies' Petition* was printed nearly verbatim from a manuscript in the handwriting of the poet. Lee adds that 'reasons equally satisfactory cannot perhaps be offered with respect to all the other pieces, yet it may be confidently avowed that there does not appear any cause to question their authenticity.' He himself, it should be explained, added 'attempts of his own' to the volume, but of these nothing need here be said. The verses which follow are all taken direct from *Gay's Chair*: and, if really Gay's, may, we think, a great many of them, be safely regarded as the productions of his youth, written, perhaps, during the somewhat extended visit to Devonshire which preceded his introduction to the literary world and to Pope. The least doubtful piece, *The Ladies' Petition*, was possibly 'thrown off' upon the occasion of his visit to Exeter in 1715.

THE LADIES' PETITION

TO THE

HONORABLE THE HOUSE OF COMMONS

SIRS, we the maids of Exon city,
The Maids ! good lack, the more 's the pity !
Do humbly offer this petition,
To represent our sad condition ;
Which once made known our hope and trust is, 5
Your honoured House will do us justice.
But lest our tender sense of wrong,
And volubility of tongue
Should make us trespass on your leisure,
And speechify it out of measure, 10
To save our breath and eke your time
We clog our fluent speech with rhyme.

First you shall hear—but can't you guess
The reason of our sad distress?—
(Plague on the widows that compel us 15
Thus to petition 'bout young fellows !)
But we were saying—you must know,
Tho' blushing we declare our woe,
A maiden was design'd by nature
A weakly and imperfect creature, 20
So liable to err or stray,
Her wants require a guide, a stay ;

And then so timorous of sprites,
 She dreads to be alone at nights!
 Say what she will, do what she can, 25
 Her heart still gravitates to man ;
 From whence 'tis evident as light
 That marriage is a woman's right ;
 And therefore 'tis prodigious hard
 To be of such a right debarr'd : 30
 Yet we, poor souls, can't have the freedom
 To get good husbands, tho' we need 'em !
 The Widows, Sirs !—Their art denotes
 Them Machiavels in petticoats.

These plagues, with heads on mischief run- 35
 ning,
 Exceed by far the fox in cunning !
 They cut us out, are still before us,
 And leave no lovers to adore us !
 ' Adore us !' nay, 'tis ten times worse,
 Deuce take 'em ! (but we should not curse) 40
 For tho' our number is not small,
 There 's hardly one amongst us all,
Scarce one—'tis true as G's in Glo'ster,
 Can get a Strephon to accost her !
 No single creature e'er is seen 45
 With bearded chin and manly mien,
 But what they have him in a minute !
 Well ! sure there is some witchcraft in it,
 And all the elves are magic pimps.
 To aid and succour widow imps ! 50
 For when by force of all our wits,
 Kind looks, kind words, and fainting fits,

We've brought our beaux just to the lure,
And think the captives are secure——
When the ring glitters in our eye, 55
The lawyer call'd, the parson nigh,
Up starts a widow in the way,
And disappoints us of the prey ;
By some curst hocus-pocus trick
The lover leaves us in the nick, 60
And our confusion to confound
He's led directly to Lob's pound.
Besides, what makes it more provoking,
The dames oft wound us by their joking,
Tho' they've a thousand times been told 65
They need not be so pert and bold ;
For could we have the chance to try,
We would be wives, or else know why !
And having welcomed wedlock's boon,
We might be widows too, and soon ! 70
Thank heaven, we want nor will nor breath
To plague or talk a man to death !
But then the spiteful troop upbraids,
Calling us, sneeringly, old maids !
(The major part of us they mean) 75
You well may think it moves our spleen,
When we must suffer such disgraces,
Or, what is worse, display our faces :
The fair and timid sex esteem'd,
We should about fifteen be deem'd ; 80
Timid and fair are signs of youth ;
The widows can't deny this truth.
If still they urge we are not young,
However glib or loud the tongue,

Till we afford 'em more conviction,
E'en let them talk *sans* contradiction! 85

'Old maids indeed!' for goodness' sake
Could they no likelier scandal make?
When time's so much at our devotion,
They could not think to spread the notion 90
In spite of registers and nurses
(Whose blunders well deserve our curses)
Obsequious to a maiden's will,
Old Time turns backward or stands still.
However strange the thing appears, 95
Some have been twenty, twenty years!
And some that reckon just a score,
Were thirty, ten years since, or more!

Need any person now be told
That single ladies can't grow old? 100
We should despise such taunting carriage,
Did we not quite despair of marriage;
Nor about husbands make this fuss,
Were there enough for them and us.
But 'tis the truth we represent t'ye 105
Men are so scarce and maids so plenty,
That were each man a maid to wed,
Not one in fifty would be led
To Hymen's shrine, or, during life,
Become that envied thing—a wife. 110

While thus the widows interlope,
How can we maidens live in hope?
Your honoured House will then debate
On our most lamentable state.

And after hearing this as fact 115
Will guard our rights by legal act ;
For if the widows be allowed
To taunt us thus, and be so proud,
We maidens must embrace the pillow,
Or cut a caper from a willow ! 120

But lest your honours should surmise
That we, more resolute than wise,
Make 'gainst the widows an invective,
When 'tis ourselves are most defective,
We state (and thus for favour sue) 125
That all that can be done, we do ;
We plot, devise, try every plan,
To win the fickle creature man ;
Contriving, or pursuing schemes,
Not more when waking than in dreams ; 130
At every moment, every place,
Our lures we 're throwing with a grace,
In curtseying, smiling, nodding, talking,
In laughing, singing, dancing, walking,
In romping, frowning, ogling, dressing, 135
And fifty things that want expressing ;
At home, abroad, by night, by day,
We various stratagems display.

But sure the most becoming airs
Are those we practise at our prayers ! 140
And therefore nothing can be fitter
Than frequent visits to St. Peter !
Which every maid more duly pays
Than Canons on refecton days.

Ah ! Sirs, 'twould do you good to know 145
 The nice demeanour there we show :
 And sure such visits are enchanting—
 Good company is never wanting !
 The forms too, and the ordinances,
 So suited to young ladies' fancies ; 150
 For meekness graced by pure contrition,
 To female beauty gives addition.
 While turning round to crave a blessing,
 The figure's seen and taste in dressing !
 There one may sit, the eye not idle, 155
 Tho' our discretion hold the bridle,
 And archly view, behind a fan,
 Which is the smartest gentleman ;
 And while we are his worth attesting,
 He soon becomes more interesting, 160
 Claims more respect, more notice shares,
 And renders more devout our prayers !

If ever, as 'twill sometimes happen,
 One cannot get one's hood or cap on,
 So early as to be at church, 165
 We never leave it in the lurch,
 But with all possible regard
 Wait in the consecrated yard :
 Hinder'd by no profane pretences,
 There we discharge our consciences ! 170
 Away we sail—if rough the weather,
 It more directly drives us thither.
 What tho' the wind disturbs our clothes,
 Why should the widows harm suppose ?

Surely there can be nothing shocking 175
 In a neat ankle and silk stocking !
 If coxcombs pry and make a fuss,
 The blame must lie with them, not us.

So far we trust we do our duty,
 In setting off our wit and beauty. 180
 But more if Nature on her part,
 Leaves us the smallest room for art.
 We say, and to our praise 'tis known,
 We show more graces than our own :
 With stiffened stays or iron bodices, 185
 We are as finely shaped as goddesses.
 If native colours are too faint,
 It surely can't be wrong to paint
 If too reveal'd the lily shows,
 What harm to imitate the rose ? 190
 A patch that hides a freckled place
 May add a beauty to the face ;
 Then as to faults—admit we 've one,
 Its name we change—the fault is gone :
 For instance, if Miss looks awry, 195
 Ha ! Miss has got an ogling eye !
 Or if a lengthen'd heel she want,
 Her step 's genteel, 'tis elegant !

Yet, sirs, in spite of all our cares,
 Our melting eyes and plaintive airs. 200
 We must allow, when press'd thus far.
 Just where we were at first we are ;
 All means have fail'd—all tricks miscarried,
 And we, alas ! are still unmarried !

Since then, 'tis not our fault but fortune, 205
 We take the freedom to importune
 Your House will let it be enacted,
 That not one widow be contracted,
 Or, that it henceforth may be reckon'd
 ' She kill'd the first who weds a second,' 210
 Till every maid is in the way
 Of wedlock's treat as well as they.

And yet in case (but heaven avert it !)
 A luckless fair should be deserted,
 She from that very hour may claim 215
 A widow's privilege and name.
 But since we plainly can foresee
 The task will not more easy be
 To keep the widow'd host from marrying,
 Than 'tis to keep the crows from carrion, 220
 We think 'twill be extremely proper,
 With all despatch to send a troop here
 Of bold gallants to prop our cause,
 Our rights maintain and aid the laws !
 But if you find it hard to muster 225
 Of such like beaus sufficient cluster,
 Rather than leave a single creature
 Of our complacent modest nature,
 To bear the taunts of widow elves
 Take us, we pray you, to yourselves ; 230
 For we imagine and don't flatter,
 You will not start at such a matter ;
 For if 'tis rightly understood,
 Our private weal is public good,

And public good, the wise ones say, 235
 All real patriots should sway.

Then if you are not dead to beauty,
 And know your parliamentary duty,
 The question put—divide—and so,
 When you say Ay we 'll not say No ! 240

Come, make election, pick and choose,
 Welcome to take but not refuse :
 Here all your fancies may be suited,
 With real maids and maids reputed.

From these proposals we expect 245
 The best your judgment can effect ;
 Aid then our wishes—grant the boon,
 And, we beseech you, grant it soon.

Old proverbs state, strike while you may,
 All men lose something by delay, 250
 And maids in sunshine should make hay :
 Grant then this suit, Exonian spinsters say
 And your petitioners will ever pray.

TO MISS JANE SCOTT

THE Welsh girl is pretty,
 The English girl fair,
 The Irish deem'd witty,
 The French *débonnaire* ;

Though all may invite me, 15
 I'd value them not ;
 The charms that delight me
 I find in a SCOT.

PREDICTION

DAME DOLEFUL, as old stories say,
 Foresaw th' events of every day,
 An tho' to Satan no relation,
 Dealt largely in prognostication :
 Whatever accident befell, 5
 She plainly could the cause foretell ;
 A hundred reasons she could show,
 And finish with—' I told you so !'

One day her son (a waggish youth)
 Put on the serious face of truth, 10
 And feigning sorrow, to her ran—
 He thus his wondrous tale began :
 ' Oh, mother ! mother !—What d'ye think ?
 Letting old Dobbin out to drink,
 Poor beast, he neigh'd and shook his mane, 15
 And had such megrims in his brain,
 That I did fear—' Dame stopp'd him short
 Before half finish'd his report :
 ' Ay, ay : thy mother all foresees—
 Dobbin hath fallen and broke his knees ! 20
 I knew how 'twas :—I told you so.'
 In vain her son replied, ' No, no ;
 Good mother, listen, hear me out '—
 As Dobbin hungry smelt about,—

' Boy, I foresee what thou would'st say, 25
 Dobbin hath eat—the rick of hay !'
 ' O, worse than that !—he paw'd the ground,
 And snorted, kick'd, and gallop'd round,
 Then wildly staring ran to find
 The stone on which our scythes we grind ; 30
 And gnaw'd—and gnaw'd—ah, woe betide !
 He oped his hungry chops so wide,
 And look'd so ravenous, d'ye see,
 I was afraid he'd swallow me !—
 At last,—' Ay, ay, I 'm not surprised, 35
 'Tis what I all along surmised.—
 I knew 'twould be—I heard him groan—
 Dobbin hath eat—the Grinding Stone.'

COMPARISONS

A LAMB and a lion—a fox and an ass,
 Resemble mankind, as it were in a glass ;
 Males are harmless as lambs till they're fourteen
 years old,
 And till they are forty, as lions are bold ;
 As foxes they 're cunning till three-score and ten, 5
 Then, silly as asses no longer are men.

A dove and a sparrow—a parrot and crow,
 The life of a woman most aptly will show ;
 Girls innocent doves are till fourteen years old,
 And chirrup like sparrows, till forty are told ; 10
 Like parrots they 'll prate till they 're three-score and
 ten,
 And as crows often croak, so do most old *women*.

ABSENCE

AUGUSTUS, frowning, gave command,
 And Ovid left his native land ;
 From Julia as an exile sent,
 He long with barb'rous Goths was pent.

So fortune frown'd on me and I was driven, 5
 From friends, from home, from Jane and happy
 Devon !
 And Jane sore grieved when from me torn away ;—
 I loved her sorrow, though I wish'd her—GAY !

FABLE

A MILK-WHITE swan in Æsop's time,
 Had got the knack of making rhyme ;
 All other birds he did excel ;
 Wrote verses,—yes,—and wrote them well ;
 Prais'd was his genius and his parts— 5
 All wonder'd how he reach'd the arts :
 Except some geese in neighbouring brook ;
 Yet even *they* admired his look,
 And grudg'd each feather in his wing ;
 But, envious, hiss'd whene'er he'd sing ! 10
 His sonnets they denounced as *satire*,
 His lyric pleasantries, *ill-nature*.

One day these geese most pertly squall'd,
 'Cygnet!'—for so the swan was call'd—
 'Cygnet,—why will you thus abuse 15
 Our patience with your dogg'el muse?
 Not only you offend our ears,
 But you assail our characters!
 Blush, and no longer do amiss.'
 The critics ended with a hiss. 20

Erect the cygnet raised his crest,
 And thus the silly geese address'd :
 'I know not any of your tribe—
 Why, then, d'ye feel my jest or gibe?
 Fools ever—('tis a certain rule) 25
 Think they're the butts of ridicule ;
 As if they so important were,
 No other theme the muse could cheer.
 Begone ! you but yourselves expose,
 When thus your folly you disclose : 30
 Know this, and then your gabbling cease—
 Swans like my verse ; but YOU are—*Geese* !

CONGRATULATION

TO A NEWLY-MARRIED PAIR

WHILE artful dames and gay coquettes
 Catch fops and fools in cobweb nets ;

While giddy girls wed hoary swains,
 And barter happiness for gains ;
 While misers, anxious to be great, 5
 With fortunes take the wives they hate ;
 Your wiser plan has proved 'tis right
 The heart should with the hand unite ;
 And those who would their joys improve,
 Must build their hopes on mutual love. 10
 Whoe'er attend to Reason's voice,
 Will thus with prudence make their choice ;
 On this hinge hangs the chance in life,
 Of peace, or war, 'twixt man and wife ;
 And such as disregard this caution, 15
 May shipwreck'd be on wedlock's ocean.

A DEVONSHIRE HILL

OFT have shepherds enamour'd, in pastoral lays,
 Sweetly sung of the grove, grot, or fountain,
 No scene that is rural but loudly its praise
 They have echo'd from mountain to mountain.
 Some delighted have been with a meadow or vale, 5
 But with these my taste never could tally ;
 The meadow is pleasant, enchanting the dale,
 But a hill I prefer to a valley.

For prospect extended, and landscape most rare,
 With health-breathing breezes inviting, 10
 No daisy-pied mead with a hill can compare,
 No garden yield sweets more delighting ;

As a mole-heap's excell'd by a mound that's raised
 high,
 As a street may exceed a small alley,
 Even so to my mind, when these objects are nigh, 15
 Is the hill I prefer to a valley.

But the hill of all hills the most pleasing to me
 Is famed Cotton, the pride of North Devon ;
 When its summit I climb, O, I then seem to be
 Just as if I approach'd nearer heaven ! 20
 When with troubles depress'd, to this hill I repair,
 My spirits then instantly rally ;
 It was near this bless'd spot I first drew vital air,
 So—a hill I prefer to a valley.

LETTER TO A YOUNG LADY

DEAR Madam, I your mercy crave
 For my poor namesake John, your slave ;
 Behold him abject at your feet ;
 Now is your triumph most complete :
 A helpless victim see he lies, 5
 Half slain by your all-conquering eyes—
 Those eyes which, like the midday sun,
 None can with safety look upon.

To you (oh ! take it in good part)
 He gave the maidhood of his heart, 10

Untouch'd by any former love ;
 Sure some compassion this might move ;
 His heart, which ne'er before was sway'd,
 You like a cullender have made,
 And 'less your power and mercy's equal, 15
 Indeed, dear ma'am, I dread the sequel ;
 For love, beyond all other ills,
 Despises juleps, drops, and pills.

If wedlock may be deem'd a pleasure,
 You can't too soon possess the treasure ! 20
 Consider, then, the loss of time,
 And snatch the roses in their prime ;
 Teaze not the man who'll grace your house,
 As a young cat torments a mouse :
 Seeming regardless of the prize, 25
 Puss slily turns aside her eyes ;
 But should he run—'tis all in vain,
 For snap ! she brings him back again !
 Again the panting wretch she mumbles,
 Again she tosses him, and tumbles !— 30

But have you, madam, never seen,
 When in the wall a hole hath been,
 The pris'ner seize a lucky minute,
 And in a trice hath slipp'd within it,
 Leaving behind the tyrant puss, 35
 To purr and claw and make a fuss ?

Pardon, I pray, the facts I state,
 Nor think I mean t' insinuate

Your captive mouse will run away,
 And you the part of puss must play ! 40
 O, no such thing ! what I fear most,
 Is, that the mouse, thus plagued and tost,
 Should by such usage be quite wasted,
 Before one morsel has been tasted ;
 For what are all such tricks at last, 45
 But schemes to heighten the repast ?
 Or what avails it thus to treat,
 And take him when there 's nought to eat ?
 Rather than hazard such mishap,
 Entice him kindly to the trap : 50
 You won't, I trust, the thought disparage,
 I mean, dear ma'am, the trap of marriage !
 A trap, I'm sure, he can't withstand,
 If you but lay the bait—your hand !

As I've his welfare much at heart, 55
 Don't blame that I take his part ;
 He my companion was, and cheerful,
 And not of any female fearful,
 He joked at love, or seem'd to doubt it,
 And laugh'd at those who talk'd about it. 60
 But hear him as a child now mutter ;
 Like one that 's lost its bread and butter !
 Since thoughts of you first fill'd his head,
 His heart as heavy is as lead,
 And if, dear ma'am, you don't befriend him, 65
 Love's fatal power will surely end him.

But fearing this may be intrusion,
 I'll bring my subject to conclusion,

Begging you will not mock his sighing,
 And keep him thus whole years a-dying ! 70
 ' Whole years ! '—Excuse my freely speaking.
 Such tortures, why a month—a week in ?
 Caress, or kill him quite in one day,
 Obliging thus your servant, JOHN GAY.

TO MY CHAIR

THOU faithful vassal to my wayward will !
 Thou patient midwife to my labouring skill !
 My pen and ink's choice cell ! my paper's pillow !
 Thou steady friend, e'en were thy master mellow !
 My seat !—I visit not the proud St. Stephen ; 5
 St. Stephen knows not *me*—so we are even.
 A seat, obtain'd not by a threat or bribe ;
 But free, uninfluenced by an influenced tribe :
 Thou 'rt my inheritance—I boast no other ;
 My throne *unique* ! for thou hast not a brother. 10

Surrounded by my friends, secure from foes,
 By thee upheld, I calmly seek repose.
 Soothed by thy comfort, my ideas spread—
 Aërial forms assemble round my head !
 Titles and honours court me—in the air ! 15
 A proof that I've been *building castles* there !

Days, months, and years I've musing sat in thee,
 And when grown pettish thou ne'er answered'st me ;

A quality this is, so rarely seen,
'Twould be a jewel might adorn a queen. 20

My study thou !—my favourite resting-place !
My tabernacle where I pray for grace !
My spouse ! for in thy arms I oft recline,
And hope, though pleased with progeny of thine,
That no base offspring ever may be mine. 25

MISCELLANEOUS
PIECES IN VERSE

THE larger portion of the miscellaneous pieces contained in this section are taken from the quarto edition of Gay's poems (1720) and from Pope and Swift's *Miscellanies* (1727). There are in the latter collection other verses that have been attributed to Gay—among them Pope's lines 'occasioned by reading the travels of Captain Lemuel Gulliver' and one or two ballads. *Bounce to Fop, an Epistle from a Dog at Twickenham to a Dog at Court*, is given as Gay's in Bell's edition of his works (1773). For our part, we have no hesitation in attributing this piece to Pope; although Mr. Courthope has failed to include it in his recent edition of that poet's works. The versification has a smoothness never attained to by Gay, and the piece contains an epithet—'Lord Fanny'—which did not come into use until a year after his death. The poems here given may, we think, all of them be safely regarded as Gay's. One piece of unquestionable authenticity—the lines on Ditton and Whiston—has been left out. The curious will find it in the *Miscellanies* already referred to, and will without difficulty understand the reason for its omission.

PANTHEA

AN ELEGY

LONG had Panthea felt Love's secret smart,¹
And hope and fear alternate ruled her heart ;²
Consenting glances had her flame confest.
(In woman's eyes her very soul's exprest)³
Perjured Alexis saw the blushing maid, 5
He saw, he swore, he conquer'd and betray'd ;
Another love now calls him from her arms,
His fickle heart another beauty warms ;
Those oaths oft whisper'd in Panthea's ears,
He now again to Galatea swears. 10
Beneath a beach th' abandon'd virgin laid,
In grateful solitude enjoys the shade ;
There with faint voice she breathed these moving
 strains,
While fighting Zephyrs shared her am'rous pains

Pale settled sorrow hangs upon my brow, 15
Dead are my charms ; Alexis breaks his vow !

The earliest version (Steele's *Poetical Miscellanies*, 1713) reads:—

1 'Panthea long had felt Love's pleasing smart.'

2 'And the strong passion ruled her tender heart.'

3 'And told the secret anguish of her breast.'

Think, think, dear shepherd, on the days you knew,
 When I was happy, when my swain was true ; ¹
 Think how thy looks and tongue are form'd to
 move,
 And think yet more—that all my fault was love. 20
 Ah, could you view me in this wretched state !
 You might not love me, but you could not hate.
 Could you behold me in this conscious shade,
 Where first thy vows, where first my love was
 paid,
 Worn out with watching, sullen² with despair, 25
 And see each eye swell with a gushing tear ?
 [Those eyes which oft you said were to your sight
 Grateful as day and welcome as the light.]³
 Could you behold me on this mossy bed,
 From my pale cheek the lively crimson fled, 30
 Which in my softer hours you oft have sworn,
 With rosy beauty far out-blush'd the morn ;
 Could you untouch'd this wretched object bear,
 And would not lost Panthea claim a tear ?
 You could not, sure—tears from your eyes would
 steal 35
 And unawares thy tender soul reveal.
 Ah, no !—thy soul with cruelty is fraught,
 No tenderness disturbs thy savage thought :

¹ ' Ah, cruel youth ! tho' love thy bosom flies,
 And now no charms reign in Panthea's eyes :
 Yet think, Alexis, that one thou hast known,
 A wretched virgin by thy vows undone.'

² ' Stupid.'

³ The couplet within brackets occurs in the 1713 version only.

Sooner shall tigers spare the trembling lambs,
 And wolves with pity hear their bleating dams; 40
 Sooner shall vultures from their quarry fly,
 Than false Alexis for Panthea sigh.
 Thy bosom ne'er a tender thought confest
 Sure stubborn flint has ¹ arm'd thy cruel breast ;
 But hardest flints are worn by frequent rains, 45
 And the soft drops dissolve their solid veins ;
 While thy relentless heart more hard appears,
 And is not soften'd by a flood of tears.

Ah, what is love ! Panthea's joys are gone,
 Her liberty, her peace, her reason flown ! 50
 And when I view me in the wat'ry glass,
 I find Panthea now, not what she was.
 As northern winds the new-blown roses blast,
 And on the ground their fading ruins cast ;
 As sudden blights corrupt the ripen'd ² grain, 55
 And of its verdure spoil the mournful plain ;
 So hapless love on blooming features preys,
 So hapless love destroys our peaceful days.³

Come, gentle sleep, relieve these wearied eyes,
 All sorrow in thy soft embraces dies : 60
 There, spite of all thy perjured vows, I find
 Faithless Alexis languishingly kind :
 Sometimes he leads me by the mazy stream,
 And pleasingly deludes me in my dream :

¹ 'Hath.'

² 'Rip'ning.'

³ 'So tort'ring love preys on the youthful face,
 And beauty strips of ev'ry blooming grace.'

Sometimes he guides me to the secret grove, 65
 Where all our looks and all our talk is love.
 Oh, could I thus consume each tedious day,
 And in sweet slumbers dream my life away :
 But sleep, which now no more relieves these eyes,
 To my sad soul the dear deceit denies. 70

Why does the sun dart forth its cheerful rays?
 Why do the woods resound with warbling lays?
 Why does the rose her grateful fragrance yield,
 And yellow cowslips paint the smiling field?
 Why do the streams with murm'ring music flow, 75
 And why do groves their friendly shade bestow?
 Let sable clouds the cheerful sun deface,
 Let mournful silence seize the feather'd race ;
 No more, ye roses, grateful fragrance yield,
 Droop, droop, ye cowslips, in the blasted field ; 80
 No more, ye streams, with murm'ring music flow,¹
 And let not groves a friendly shade bestow :
 With sympathizing grief let nature mourn.
 And never know the youthful spring's return :
 And shall I never more Alexis see? 85
 Then what is spring, or grove, or streams to me?²

Why sport the skipping lambs on³ yonder plain?
 Why do the birds their tuneful voices strain?
 Why frisk those heifers in the cooling grove?
 Their happier life is ignorant of love. 90

¹ ' Stand still, ye murm'ring streams, no longer flow.

² ' For my Alexis from the plains is gone,
 And with him all Panthea's joys are flown.'

³ ' In.'

Oh lead me to some melancholy cave,
 To lull my sorrows in a living grave ;
 From the dark rock where dashing waters fall,
 And creeping ivy hangs the craggy wall,
 Where I may waste in tears my hours away, 95
 And never know the seasons or the day.
 Die, die, Panthea—fly this hateful grove,
 For what is life without the swain I love ?

ARAMINTA

AN ELEGY¹

Now Phœbus rose ; and with his early beams
 Waked slumb'ring Delia from her pleasing dreams ;
 Her wishes by her fancy were supplied,
 And in her sleep the nuptial knot was tied.
 With secret joy she saw the morning ray 5
 Chequer the floor, and through the curtains play ;
 The happy morn that shall her bliss complete,
 And all her rivals' envious hopes defeat.
 In haste she rose ; forgetful² of her pray'rs,
 Flew to the glass, and practised o'er her airs : 10
 Her new-set jewels round her robe are placed,
 Some in a brilliant buckle bind her waist ;

¹ The first version of this piece (Steele's *Poetical Miscellanies*, 1713) describes it as 'A Town Eclogue.' Other variations from the quarto text, which is here followed, are noted where they occur.

² 'Unmindful.'

Some round her neck a circling light display,
 Some in her hair diffuse a trembling ray ;
 The silver knot o'erlooks the Mechlen lace, 15
 And adds becoming beauties to her face :
 Brocaded flowers o'er the gay manteau shine,
 And the rich stays her taper shape confine ;
 Thus all her dress exerts a graceful pride,
 And sporting Loves surround th' expecting bride, 20
 For Daphnis now attends the blushing maid,
 Before the Priest their solemn vows are paid ;
 [Daphnis, for whom so many ladies sigh,
 Wish of each heart ; delight of every eye ;]¹
 This day which ends at once all Delia's cares, 25
 Shall swell a thousand eyes with secret tears.
 Cease, Araminta, 'tis in vain to grieve,
 Canst thou from Hymen's bonds the youth retrieve?
 Disdain his perj'ries, and no longer mourn :
 Recall my love, and find a sure return.² 30

But still the wretched maid no comfort knows,
 And with resentment cherishes her woes ;
 Alone she pines, and in these mournful strains,
 Of Daphnis' vows, and her own fate complains :

Was it for this I sparkled at the play, 35
 And loiter'd in the ring whole hours away ?

¹ The couplet in brackets occurs only in the first version of the poem.

² 'Cease, Araminta, now no longer grieve,
 Thou ne'er from Hymen can'st the youth retrieve.
 Why then in vain will Araminta mourn ?
 Bestow thy love where thou may'st hope return.'

When if thy chariot in the circle shone,
 Our mutual passion by our looks was known :
 Through the gay crowd my watchful glances flew,
 Where'er I pass thy grateful eyes pursue. 40

*Ah faithless youth ! too well you saw my pain ;
 For eyes the language of the soul explain.*

Think, Daphnis, think that scarce five days are fled,
 Since (O false tongue !) ¹ those treach'rous things you
 said ;
 How did you praise my shape and graceful air ! 45
 And woman thinks all compliments sincere.
 Didst thou not then in rapture ² speak thy flame,
 And in soft sighs breathe Araminta's name ?
 Didst thou not then with oaths thy passion prove,
 And with an awful trembling, say—I love ? 50

*Ah faithless youth ! too well you saw my pain ;
 For eyes the language of the soul explain.*

How could'st thou thus, ungrateful youth, deceive ?
 How could I thus, unguarded maid, believe ?
 Sure thou canst well recall that fatal night, 55
 When subtle love first enter'd at my sight :
 When in the dance I was thy partner chose,
 Gods ! what a rapture in my bosom rose !
 My trembling hand my sudden joy confess'd,
 My glowing cheeks a wounded heart express'd ; 60
 My looks spoke love ; while you with answ'ring eyes
 In killing glances made as kind replies.

¹ ' In mine ears.'

² ' Raptures.'

Think, Daphnis, think, what tender things you said,
 Think what confusion all my soul betray'd ;
 You call'd my graceful presence Cynthia's air, 65
 And when I sung, the Syrens charm'd your ear ;
 My flame blown up by flatt'ry stronger grew,
 A gale of love in ev'ry whisper flew.¹

*Ah faithless youth ! too well you saw my pain ;
 For eyes the language of the soul explain.* 70

Whene'er I dress'd, my maid, who knew my flame,
 Cherish'd my passion with thy lovely name ;
 Thy picture in her talk so lively grew,
 That thy dear image rose before my view ;
 She dwelt whole hours upon thy shape and mien, 75
 And wounded Delia's fame to soothe my spleen :
 When she beheld me at the name grow pale,
 Straight to thy charms she changed her artful tale ;
 And when thy matchless charms were quite run o'er,
 I bid her tell the pleasing tale once more. 80
 Oh, Daphnis ! from thy Araminta fled !
 Oh, to my love for ever, ever dead !
 Like death, his nuptials all my hope² remove,
 And ever part me from the man I love.

*Ah faithless youth ! too well you saw my pain ; 85
 For eyes the language of the soul explain.*

¹ This couplet takes the place of the following four lines in the first version :—

' How did thy flatt'ry my weak bosom move,
 When in each whisper flew a gale of love !
 But Daphnis now hath forfeited his truth,
 And marriage bonds confine the perjured youth.'

² 'Hopes.'

O might I by my cruel fate be thrown,
 In some retreat far from this hateful town !
 Vain dress and glaring equipage, adieu !
 Let happier nymphs those empty shows pursue, 90
 Me, let some melancholy shade surround,
 Where not the print of human step is found.
 In the gay dance my feet no more shall move,
 But bear me faintly through the lonely grove ;
 No more these hands shall o'er the spinnet bound, 95
 And from the sleeping strings call forth the sound ;
 Music adieu, farewell Italian airs !
 The croaking raven ¹ now shall soothe my cares.
 On some old ruin lost in thought I rest, ²
 And think how Araminta once was blest ; 100
 There o'er and o'er thy letters I peruse,
 And all my grief in one kind sentence lose,
 Some tender line by chance my woe beguiles,
 And on my cheek a short-lived pleasure smiles ;
 Why is this dawn of joy? flow tears again ; 105
 Vain are these oaths, and all these vows are vain ; ³
 Daphnis, alas ! the Gordian knot has tied, ⁴
 Nor force nor cunning can the band divide.

*Ah faithless youth ! since eyes the soul explain,
 Why knew I not that artful tongue could feign ?* ⁵ 110

1 ' Ravens.

2 ' Involv'd in thought on some old trunk I rest.'

3 ' But sorrow soon my bosom will regain,
 And tell me all those oaths and vows were vain.'

4 ' For Daphnis now the gordian knot hath tied.'

5 ' For eyes the language of the soul explain.'

A CONTEMPLATION ON NIGHT

WHETHER amid¹ the gloom of night I stray,
 Or my glad eyes enjoy revolving day,
 Still Nature's various face informs my sense,
 Of an all-wise, all-powerful Providence.

When the gay sun first breaks the shades of night,² 5
 And strikes³ the distant eastern hills with light,
 Colour returns, the plains their liv'ry wear,
 And a bright verdure clothes the smiling year ;
 The blooming flowers with op'ning beauties glow,
 And grazing flocks their milky fleeces show, 10
 The barren cliffs with chalky fronts arise,
 And a pure azure arches o'er the skies.
 But when the gloomy reign of night returns,
 Stript of her fading pride all nature mourns :
 The trees no more their wonted verdure boast, 15
 But weep in dewy tears their beauty lost ;
 No distant landscapes draw our curious eyes,
 Wrapt in night's robe the whole creation lies.
 Yet still, even now, while darkness clothes the land,
 We view the traces of th' Almighty hand ; 20
 Millions of stars in heaven's wide vault appear,
 And with new glories hang the boundless sphere :

The earliest version (Steele's *Poetical Miscellanies*, 1713) reads :—

1 'Amidst.' 2 'Dissolves the breaking night.' 3 'Paints.'

The silver moon her western couch forsakes,
 And o'er the skies her nightly circle makes,
 Her solid globe beats back the sunny rays, 25
 And to the world her borrow'd light repays.

Whether those stars that twinkling lustre send,
 Are suns, and rolling worlds those suns attend,
 Man may conjecture, and new schemes declare,
 Yet all his systems but conjectures are ; 30
 But this we know, that heaven's eternal King,
 Who bid this universe from nothing spring,
 Can at his Word bid num'rous worlds appear,
 And rising worlds th' all-powerful Word shall hear.

[All human nature nightly sleep repairs, 35
 Unbends the mind, and softens all its cares ;
 With sleep the wearied hind his strength renews,
 And the next morn his constant task pursues.]¹

When to the western main the sun descends,
 To other lands a rising day he lends, 40
 The spreading dawn another ² shepherd spies,
 The wakeful flocks from their warm folds arise,
 Refresh'd, the peasant seeks his early toil,
 And bids the plough correct the fallow soil.
 While we in sleep's embraces waste the night, 45
 The climes opposed enjoy meridian light :
 And when those lands ³ the busy sun forsakes,
 With us again the rosy morning wakes ;

¹ The four lines in brackets do not occur in the Quarto version of the piece.

² 'The watchful.'

³ 'Their clime.'

In lazy sleep the night rolls swift away,¹
 And neither clime laments his absent ray. 50

When the pure soul is from the body flown,
 No more shall night's alternate reign be known :
 [To blest abodes she swiftly shoots away,
 And in those regions drinks eternal day.]²
 The sun no more shall rolling light bestow, 55
 But from th' Almighty streams of glory flow.
 Oh, may some nobler thought my soul employ
 Than empty, transient, sublunary joy !
 The stars shall drop, the sun shall lose his flame,
 But Thou, O God, for ever shine the same. 60

A THOUGHT ON ETERNITY³

ERE the foundations of the world were laid,
 Ere kindling light th' Almighty word obey'd,
 Thou wert ; and when the subterraneous flame
 Shall burst its prison, and devour this frame,
 From⁴ angry heaven when the keen lightning flies, 5
 When fervent heat dissolves the melting skies,

¹ 'Each sleeps in healthful ease dull night away.'

² This couplet does not occur in the Quarto reprint of the piece.

³ This, like the three pieces which precede it, is printed as given in the Quarto edition of Gay's 'Poems' (1720); variations from the earliest version (Steele's *Poetical Miscellanies*, 1713) being noted where they occur.

⁴ 'And.'

Thou still shalt be ; still as thou wert before,
 And know no change, when time shall be no more.
 [As a small drop in the wide ocean 's tost,
 So time shall in eternity be lost.]¹ 10
 O endless thought ! divine eternity !
 Th' immortal soul shares but a part of thee ;
 For thou wert present when our life began,
 When the warm dust shot up in breathing man.

Ah ! what is life ? with ills encompass'd round, 15
 Amidst our hopes,² Fate strikes the sudden wound :
 To-day the statesman³ of new honour dreams,
 To-morrow death destroys his airy schemes ;
 Is mouldy treasure in thy chest confined ?
 Think all that treasure thou must leave behind ;⁴ 20
 Thy heir with smiles shall view thy blazon'd hearse,
 And all thy hoards with lavish hand disperse.⁵
 [Thy lovely wife resign her balmy breath,
 And stiffen in the frozen arms of death.]⁶
 Should certain⁷ fate th' impending blow delay, 25
 Thy mirth will sicken and thy bloom decay ;
 Then feeble age will all thy nerves disarm,
 No more thy blood⁸ its narrow channels warm.

¹ These lines occur only in the earliest version of the poem.

² 'Midst our vast hopes.' ³ 'Th' ambitious.'

⁴ 'Does hoarded treasure moulder in thy chest ?
 Or art thou with a beauteous consort blest ?'

⁵ 'Thy lavish heir shall soon thy wealth disperse,
 And with feign'd tears attend thy blazon'd hearse.'

⁶ This couplet finds a place in the earliest version only.

⁷ 'Dreadful.' ⁸ 'Nor can thy blood.'

[Who would vain life on such conditions bear,
 To groan beneath the load of fourscore year.]¹ 30
 Who then would wish² to stretch this narrow span,
 To suffer life beyond the date of man?

The virtuous soul pursues a nobler aim,
 And life regards but as a fleeting dream :
 She longs to wake and wishes to get free, 35
 To launch from earth into eternity.
 For while the boundless theme extends our thought,³
 Ten thousand thousand rolling years are nought.

AN ELEGY ON A LAP-DOG

SHOCK's fate I mourn ; poor Shock is now no more,
 Ye Muses mourn, ye chamber-maids deplore.
 Unhappy Shock ! yet more unhappy Fair,
 Doom'd to survive thy joy and only care !
 Thy wretched fingers now no more shall deck, 5
 And tie the fav'rite ribband round his neck ;
 No more thy hand shall smooth his glossy hair,
 And comb the wavings of his pendent ear.
 Yet cease thy flowing grief, forsaken maid ;
 All mortal pleasures in a moment fade : 10
 Our surest hope is in an hour destroy'd,
 And love, best gift of heav'n, not long enjoy'd.

¹ This couplet is in the first version only.

² 'Or nearly wish.'

³ 'For while to Thee she lifts her soaring thought.'

Then what's join'd to a place¹
 With other herbs muckle,—
 That which kill'd king Will,²
 And what never stands still;³ 10
 Some sprigs of that bed
 Where children are bred,⁴
 Which, much you will mend, if
 Both spinach and endive,
 And lettuce and beet, 15
 With marigold meet.
 Put no Water at all
 For it maketh things small,
 Which, lest it should happen,
 A close cover clap on, 20
 Put this pot of Wood's metal⁵
 In a hot boiling kettle,
 And there let it be
 (Mark the doctrine I teach)
 About,—let me see,— 25
 Thrice as long as you preach.⁶
 So skimming the fat off,
 Say grace with your hat off.
 Oh, then, with what rapture
 Will it fill dean and chapter! 30

Gay appended the following explanatory notes to the piece, which was sent by him to Swift in September 1726 (Elwin's *Pope's Works*, vii. 80):—

¹ 'Vulgo Salary.'

² 'Supposed Sorrel.'

³ 'This is by Dr. Bentley thought to be time or thyme.'

⁴ 'Parsley.' See Chamberlayne.

⁵ Of this composition see the works of the copper-farthing dean.

⁶ Which we suppose to be near four hours.

AY AND NO :

A FABLE

IN fable all things hold discourse ;
Then words, no doubt, must talk of course.

Once on a time, near Channel Row,
Two hostile adverbs, Ay and No,
Were hast'ning to the field of fight, 5
And front to front stood opposite,
Before each general join'd the van,
Ay, the more courteous knight, began.

Stop, peevish particle, beware !
I'm told you are not such a bear, 10 }
But sometimes yield, when offer'd fair.
Suffer yon' folks awhile to tattle ;
'Tis we who must decide the battle.
Whene'er we war on yonder stage,
With various fate, and equal rage, 15
The nation trembles at each blow
That No gives Ay, and Ay gives No ;
Yet in expensive long contention,
We gain nor office, grant, or pension.
Why then should kinsfolks quarrel thus ? 20
(For, two of you make one of us.)
To some wise statesman let us go,
Where each his proper use may know.

He may admit two such commanders ;
 And make those wait who served in Flanders. 25
 Let's quarter on a great man's tongue,
 A treasury lord, not master Y——g.
 Obsequious at his high command,
 Ay shall march forth to tax the land ;
 Impeachments No can best resist, 30
 And Ay support the civil list ;
 Ay ! quick as Cæsar wins the day ;
 And No, like Fabius by delay.
 Sometimes in mutual sly disguise,
 Let Ay's seem No's and No's seem Ay's ; 35
 Ay's be in courts denials meant,
 And No's in bishops give consent.

Thus Ay proposed—And for reply.
 No, for the first time, answered Ay !
 They parted with a thousand kisses, 40
 And fight e'er since for pay like Swisses.

THE QUIDNUNCKI'S

A TALE OCCASIONED BY THE DEATH OF THE
 DUKE REGENT OF FRANCE

How vain are mortal man's endeavours !
 (Said at dame Elliots¹ Master Travers)

The following readings are to be found in the earliest version
 of the piece, a broadside published in 1724 :—

¹ ' St. James's.'

Good Orleans dead ! in truth 'tis hard :
 Oh may all statesmen die prepared !
 I do foresee (and for fore-seeing 5
 He equals any man in being)
 The army ne'er can be disbanded.
 ——I wish the King were safely landed.
 Ah friends ! great changes threat the land ;
 All France and England at a stand ! 10
 There's Meroweis—mark !¹ strange work !
 And there's the Czar, and there's the Turk——
 The Pope——An Indian merchant by,
 Cut short the speech with this reply.

All at a stand ?² You see great changes? 15
 Ah, Sir ! you never saw the Ganges.
 There dwells the nation of Quidnuncki's
 (So Monomotapa calls monkie's :)³
 On either bank, from bough to bough,
 They meet and chat (as we may now.)⁴ 20
 Whispers go round, they grin, they shrug,
 They bow, they snarl,⁵ they scratch, they hug ;
 And just as chance, or whim provoke them,
 They either bite their friends, or stroke them.

There have I seen some active prig, 25
 To show his parts, bestride a twig :

1 'There's Miriweis d'ye mark ?'

2 'Things at a stand.'

3 'There dwells a race, we call them Monkeys.

Grave, sober, sage, like you Quidnuncs.'

4 'As we do now.'

5 'They smile.'

Lord! how the chatt'ring tribe admire
 Not that he's wiser but he's higher : ¹
 All long to try the vent'rous thing.
 (For power is but to have one's swing.) 30
 From side to side he springs, he spurns,
 And bangs his foes and friends by turns.
 Thus as in giddy freaks he bounces.
 Crack goes the twig and in he flounces!
 Down the swift stream the wretch is borne ; 35
 Never, ah never to return !

Z—ds ! what a fall had our dear brother ; ²
 Morbleu ! cries one, and damme t'other. ³
 The nations give a gen'ral screech,
 None cocks his tail, none claws his breech ; 40
 Each trembles for the public weal,
 And for a while forgets to steal.

Awhile all eyes, intent and steady,
 Pursue him, whirling down the eddy.
 But out of mind when out of view, 45
 Some other mounts the twig anew ;
 And business, on each monkey shore,
 Runs the same track it ran before.

¹ ' But is higher.

² ' Hah, what a fall has our dear brother.

³ ' Hela ! says t'other.'

VERSES

TO BE PLACED UNDER THE PICTURE OF ENGLAND'S
ARCH-POET [SIR RICHARD BLACKMORE]

CONTAINING A COMPLETE CATALOGUE OF HIS
WORKS

SEE who ne'er was or will be half read :
Who first sung Arthur ¹ then sung Alfred ; ²
Praised great Eliza ³ in God's anger,
Till all true Englishmen cried ' Hang her !'
Made William's virtue wipe the bare a— 5
And hang'd up Marlborough in arras ; ⁴

Then hiss'd from earth grew heav'nly quite ;
Made ev'ry reader curse the light ; ⁵
Maul'd human wit in one thick satire, ⁶
Next in three books, sunk human nature ; ⁷ 10
Undid creation ⁸ at a jerk,
And of redemption ⁹ made damn'd work.

¹ Two Heroic Poems, in folio, twenty books.

² Heroic Poem, in twelve books.

³ Heroic Poem, in folio, ten books.

⁴ Instructions to Vanberbank, a tapestry weaver.

⁵ Hymn to the light.

⁶ Satire against wit.

⁷ Of the nature of man.

⁸ Creation, a Poem, in seven books.

⁹ The Redeemer, another Heroic Poem in six books.

Then took his muse at once and dipt her
 Full in the middle of the Scripture.
 What wonders there the man grown old, did ! 15
 Sternhold himself he out-Sternholded,
 Made David ¹ seem so mad and freakish,
 All thought him just what thought king Achiz,
 No mortal read his Solomon,²
 But judged Re'boam his own son. 20
 Moses³ he served as Moses Pharaoh,
 And Deborah, as she Sise-rah :
 Made Jeremy⁴ full sore to cry,
 And Job⁵ himself curse God and die.

What punishment all this must follow 25
 Shall Arthur use him like king Tollo ?
 Shall David as Uriah slay him ?
 Or dex'trous Deb'rah Sisera-him ?
 Or shall Eliza lay a plot,
 To treat him like her sister Scot ? 30
 Shall William dub his better end ⁶
 Or Marlborough serve him like a *friend* ?
 No !—none of these !—Heav'n spare his life !
 But send him, honest Job, thy wife !

¹ Translation of all the Psalms.

² Canticles and Ecclesiastes.

³ Paraphrase of the Canticles of Moses and Deborah, etc.

⁴ The Lamentations.

⁵ The whole book of Job, a Poem, in folio.

⁶ Kick him on the breech, not knight him on the shoulder.

EPITAPH OF BYE-WORDS

HERE lies a round woman, who thought mighty odd
Every word she e'er heard in this church about God.
To convince her of God the good Dean did endeavour,
But still in her heart she held Nature more clever.
Tho' he talk'd much of virtue, her head always run 5
Upon something or other, she found better fun :
For the dame, by her skill in affairs astronomical,
Imagined, to live in the clouds was but comical.
In this world, she despised ev'ry soul she met here,
And now she's in t'other, she thinks it but queer. 10

MY OWN EPITAPH

LIFE is a jest ; and all things show it,
I thought so once ; but now I know it.

SONGS AND BALLADS

MANY of the songs and ballads here printed are taken from the quarto edition of Gay's *Poems* and from Pope and Swift's *Miscellanies*. *Sweet William's Farewell* and *Newgate's Garland*, and possibly a few others, were originally published in separate form. *Molly Mog* first appeared in the columns of a weekly newspaper. *A Ballad on Quadrille*, and the spirited, but not very decent, song commencing, 'Of all the girls that e'er were seen, There's none so fine as Nelly,' are given as Gay's in Bell's edition of his poems. The former is, however, ascribed by Sir Walter Scott to Congreve (Swift's *Works*, xiii. 319); and there is little doubt that the latter was written by Dr. Arbuthnot on his friend, Miss Nelly Bennett. (See Aitken's collected edition of Arbuthnot's *Works*, p. 92, from which, however, the piece itself is unaccountably omitted.) The greater number of the songs which follow are, it will be observed, taken from Gay's three operas and from three of his plays. The authorship of *A Ballad on Ale* cannot be fixed with certainty; it is, however, generally attributed to Gay.

SWEET WILLIAM'S FAREWELL TO BLACK-EYED SUSAN

A BALLAD

I

ALL in the Downs the fleet was moor'd,
The streamers waving in the wind,
When black-eyed Susan came aboard,
Oh ! where shall I my true love find !
Tell me, ye jovial sailors, tell me true, 5
If my sweet William sails among the crew.

II

William, who high upon the yard
Rock'd with the billow to and fro,
Soon as her well-known voice he heard,
He sigh'd and cast his eyes below : 10
The cord slides swiftly through his glowing hands,
And (quick as lightning) on the deck he stands.

III

So the sweet lark, high-poised in air,
Shuts close his pinions to his breast
(If, chance, his mate's shrill call he hear) 15
And drops at once into her nest.
The noblest captain in the British fleet,
Might envy William's lip those kisses sweet.

IV

O Susan, Susan, lovely dear,
 My vows shall ever true remain ; 20
 Let me kiss off that falling tear,
 We only part to meet again.
 Change, as ye list, ye winds ; my heart shall be
 The faithful compass that still points to thee.

V

Believe not what the landmen say, 25
 Who tempt with doubts thy constant mind :
 They'll tell thee, sailors, when away,
 In ev'ry port a mistress find.
 Yes, yes, believe them when they tell thee so,
 For thou art present wheresoe'er I go. 30

VI

If to far India's coast we sail,
 Thy eyes are seen in di'monds bright,
 Thy breath is Africk's spicy gale,
 Thy skin is ivory, so white.
 Thus ev'ry beauteous object that I view, 35
 Wakes in my soul some charm of lovely Sue.

VII

Though battle call me from thy arms,
 Let not my pretty Susan mourn ;
 Though cannons roar, yet safe from harms,
 William shall to his dear return. 40
 Love turns aside the balls that round me fly,
 Lest precious tears should drop from Susan's eye.

VIII

The boatswain gave the dreadful word,
 The sails their swelling bosom spread,
 No longer must she stay aboard : 45
 They kiss'd, she sigh'd, he hung his head :
 Her less'ning boat unwilling rows to land :
 Adieu ! she cries ; and waved her lily hand.

THE LADY'S LAMENTATION

A BALLAD

I

PHYLLIDA, that loved to dream
 In the grove, or by the stream ;
 Sigh'd on velvet pillow.
 What, alas ! should fill her head
 But a fountain or a mead, 5
 Water and a willow ?

II

Love in cities never dwells,
 He delights in rural cells
 Which sweet woodbine covers.
 What are your Assemblies then ? 10
 There, 'tis true, we see more men ;
 But much fewer lovers.

DAMON AND CUPID

A SONG

I

THE sun was now withdrawn,
The shepherds home were sped ;
The moon wide o'er the lawn
Her silver mantle spread ;
When Damon stay'd behind, 5
And saunter'd in the grove,
Will ne'er a nymph be kind,
And give me love for love ?

II

Oh ! those were golden hours,
When Love, devoid of cares, 10
In all Arcadia's bowers
Lodged swains and nymphs by pairs !
But now from wood and plain
Flies ev'ry sprightly lass,
No joys for me remain, 15
In shades, or on the grass.

III

The winged boy draws near,
And thus the swain reproves :
While beauty revell'd here,
My game lay in the groves ; 20

At Court I never fail
 To scatter round my arrows,
 Men fall as thick as hail ;
 And maidens love like sparrows.

IV

Then, swain, if me you need, 25
 Straight lay your sheep-hook down ;
 Throw by your oaten reed,
 And haste away to town.
 So well I 'm known at Court,
 None asks where Cupid dwells ; 30
 But readily resort
 To B——n's or L——ll's.

DAPHNIS AND CHLOE

A SONG

I

DAPHNIS stood pensive in the shade,
 With arms across, and head reclined ;
 Pale looks accused the cruel maid,
 And sighs relieved his love-sick mind :
 His tuneful pipe all broken lay,
 Looks, sighs, and actions seem'd to say, 5
 My Chloe is unkind.

II

Why ring the woods with warbling throats ?
 Ye larks, ye linnets, cease your strains ;

I faintly hear in your sweet notes, 10
 My Chloe's voice that wakes my pains :
 Yet why should you your song forbear ?
 Your mates delight your song to hear,
 But Chloe mine disdains.

III

As thus he melancholy stood, 15
 Dejected as the lonely dove ;
 Sweet sounds broke gently through the wood.
 I feel the sound ; my heart-strings move.
 'Twas not the nightingale that sung ;
 No. 'Tis my Chloe's sweeter tongue. 20
 Hark, hark, what says my love !

IV

How foolish is the nymph (she cries)
 Who trifles with her lover's pain !
 Nature still speaks in woman's eyes,
 Our artful lips were made to feign. 25
 O Daphnis, Daphnis, 'twas my pride,
 'Twas not my heart thy love denied,
 Come back, dear youth, again.

V

As t'other day my hand he seized,
 My blood with thrilling motion flew ; 30
 Sudden I put on looks displeas'd,
 And hasty from his hold withdrew.
 'Twas fear alone, thou simple swain,
 Then hadst thou prest my hand again,
 My heart had yielded too ! 35

VI

'Tis true, thy tuneful reed I blamed,
That swell'd thy lip and rosy cheek ;
Think not thy skill in song defamed,
That lip should other pleasures seek :
Much, much thy music I approve ; 40
Yet break thy pipe, for more I love,
Much more to hear thee speak.

VII

My heart forebodes that I 'm betray'd,
Daphnis I fear is ever gone ;
Last night with Delia's dog he play'd, 45
Love by such trifles first comes on.
Now, now, dear shepherd, come away,
My tongue would now my heart obey.
Ah Chloe, thou art won !

VIII

The youth stepp'd forth with hasty pace, 50
And found where wishing Chloe lay ;
Shame sudden lighten'd in her face,
Confused, she knew not what to say.
At last in broken words, she cried ;
To-morrow you in vain had tried,
But I am lost to-day !

THE COQUET MOTHER AND HER
DAUGHTER

A SONG

I

At the close of the day,
When the bean-flower and hay
Breathed odours in every wind :
Love enliven'd the veins
Of the damsels and swains ; 5
Each glance and each action was kind.

II

Molly, wanton and free,
Kiss'd and sat on each knee,
Fond ecstasy swam in her eyes.
See, thy mother is near, 10
Hark ! she calls thee to hear
What age and experience advise.

III

Hast thou seen the blithe dove
Stretch her neck to her love,
All glossy with purple and gold ? 15
If a kiss he obtain,
She returns it again :
What follows you need not be told.

IV

Look ye, mother, she cried,
You instruct me in pride, 20
 And men by good-manners are won.
She who trifles with all
Is less likely to fall
 Than she who but trifles with one.

V

Prithee, Molly, be wise, 25
Lest by sudden surprise
 Love should tingle in ev'ry vein :
Take a shepherd for life,
And when once you 're a wife.
 You safely may trifle again. 30

VI

Molly, smiling, replied,
Then I'll soon be a bride ;
 Old Roger has gold in his chest.
But I thought all you wives
Chose a man for your lives, 35
 And trifled no more with the rest.

NEWGATE'S GARLAND

BEING

A NEW BALLAD,

SHOWING HOW MR. JONATHAN WILD'S THROAT
 WAS CUT FROM EAR TO EAR WITH A PENKNIFE,
 BY MR. BLAKE, *alias* BLUESKIN, THE BOLD
 HIGHWAYMAN, AS HE STOOD AT HIS TRIAL
 IN THE OLD BAILEY, 1725.

To the tune of 'The Cut-Purse'

YE gallants ¹ of Newgate, whose fingers are nice,
 In diving in pockets, or cogging of dice,
 Ye sharpers so rich, who can buy off the noose,
 Ye honester poor rogues, who die in your shoes,
 Attend and draw near, 5
 Good news you shall hear,
 How Jonathan's throat was cut from ear to ear;
 How Blueskin's sharp penknife hath set you at ease,
 And every man round me may rob if he please.

¹ The broadside version of the ballad, published in 1725, reads 'fellows' instead of 'gallants.' The same version gives the last line of the refrain as: 'And every man round me may rob if they please.'

II

When to the Old Bailey this Blueskin was led, 10
 He held up his hand, his indictment was read,
 Loud rattled his chains, near him Jonathan stood,
 For full forty pounds was the price of his blood.

Then hopeless of life,

He drew his penknife, 15

And made a sad widow of Jonathan's wife.

But forty pounds paid her, her grief shall appease,
 And every man round me may rob if he please.

III

Some say they are courtiers of highest renown,
 Who steal the king's gold, and leave him but a
 crown ; 20

Some say there are peers, and parliament-men,
 Who meet once a year to rob courtiers again ;

Let them all take their swing,

To pillage the king,

And get a blue ribbon instead of a string. 25

Now Blueskin's sharp penknife hath set you at ease,
 And every man round me may rob if he please.

IV

Knaves of old, to hide guilt by their cunning
 inventions,

Call'd briberies grants, and plain robberies pensions ;
 Physicians and lawyers (who take their degrees 35

To be learned rogues) call'd their pilfering fees ;

Since this happy day,

Now ev'ry man may

Rob (as safe as in office) upon the highway.

For Blueskin's sharp penknife hath set you at ease, 35
 And every man round me may rob if he please.

V

Some cheat in the customs, some rob the excise,
 But he who robs both is esteemed most wise.
 Church-wardens, too prudent to hazard the halter,
 As yet only venture to steal from the altar : 40
 But now to get gold,
 They may be more bold,
 And rob on the highway, since Jonathan's cold.
 For Blueskin's sharp penknife hath set you at ease,
 And every man round me may rob if he please. 45

VI

Some by public revenues which pass'd through their
 hands
 Have purchased clean houses and bought dirty lands ;
 Some to steal from a charity think it no sin,
 Which at home (says the proverb) does always begin.
 But if ever you be 50
 Assign'd a trustee
 Treat not orphans like Masters of the Chancery.
 But take the highway and more honestly seize,
 For every man round me may rob if he please.

VII

What a pother has here been with Wood and his
 brass 55
 Who would modestly make a few halfpennies pass.
 The patent is good, and the precedent's old.
 For Diomedè changèd his copper for gold.

But if Ireland despise
 Thy new halfpennies, 60
 With more safety to rob on the road I advise ;
 For Blueskin's sharp penknife hath set thee at ease,
 And every man round me may rob if he please.

MOLLY MOG ;
 OR, THE FAIR MAID OF THE INN

A BALLAD

I

SAYS my Uncle, I pray you discover
 What hath¹ been the cause of your woes,
 Why² you pine and you whine like a lover?—
 I have seen Molly Mog of the Rose.

II

O Nephew ! your grief is but folly, 5
 In town you may find better prog ;
 Half-a-crown there will get you a Molly,
 A Molly much better than Mog.

III

I know that by wits 'tis recited 10
 That women at best are a clog ;
 But I am not so easily frightened
 From loving of sweet Molly Mog.

The following are the readings of the earliest version (*Mist's Journal*, August 27th, 1726):—

¹ 'Has.'

² 'That.'

IV

The school-boy's desire is ¹ a play-day ;
 The school-master's joy is to flog ;
 The milk-maid's delight is on May-Day,² 15
 But mine is on ³ sweet Molly Mog.

V

Will-a-wisp leads the trav'ler a gadding
 Thro' ditch, and thro' quagmire, and bog ;
 But no light can set me a-madding ⁴
 Like ⁵ the eyes of my sweet Molly Mog. 20

VI

For guineas in other men's breeches
 Your gamesters will palm and will cog ;
 But I envy them none of their riches,
 So I may win ⁶ sweet Molly Mog.

VII

The heart when ⁷ half wounded is changing,⁸ 25
 It here and there leaps like a frog ;
 But my heart can never be ranging,
 'Tis so fix'd upon sweet Molly Mog.⁹

1 ' The school-boys delight in.'

2 ' Fop is the delight of a lady.'

3 ' In.'

4 ' No light can e'er set me a-padding.'

5 ' But.'

6 ' So I palm my.'

7 ' The heart that's.'

8 ' Changing.'

9 ' It's so fix'd on my sweet Molly Mog.'

VIII

Who follows all ladies of pleasure,¹
 In pleasure is thought but a hog ; 30
 All the sex cannot give so good measure
 Of joys as my sweet Molly Mog.

IX

I feel I'm in love to distraction,
 My senses all lost ² in a fog ;
 And nothing can give ³ satisfaction 35
 But thinking of ⁴ sweet Molly Mog.

X

A letter when I am inditing,
 Comes Cupid and gives me a jog,
 And I fill all the ⁵ paper with writing
 Of nothing but sweet Molly Mog. 40

XI

If I would not give up the three Graces,
 I wish I were hang'd like a dog,
 And at court all the drawing-room faces,
 For a glance of ⁶ my sweet Molly Mog.

1 ' Who follows all women of pleasure,
 In love has a taste like a hog ;
 For no girl can give better measure
 Of joys than my sweet Molly Mog.'

2 ' Are.'

3 ' And in nothing can find.'

4 ' But in thought of my.'

5 ' My.'

6 ' At.'

XII

Those faces¹ want nature and spirit, 45
 And seem as cut out of a log ;
 Juno, Venus, and Pallas's merit
 Unite in my sweet Molly Mog.

XIII

Those who toast all the Family Royal,
 In bumpers of Hogan and Nog, 50
 Have hearts not more true or more loyal
 Than mine to my sweet Molly Mog.

XIV

Were Virgil alive with his Phillis,
 And writing another Eclogue ;
 Both his Phillis and fair Amaryllis 55
 He 'd give up for sweet Molly Mog.²

XV

When she smiles on each guest like her liquor,³
 Then jealousy sets me agog,
 To be sure she's a bit for the Vicar,
 And so I shall lose Molly Mog. 60

A NEW SONG OF NEW SIMILES

MY passion is as mustard strong :
 I sit all sober sad ;
 Drunk as a piper all day long,
 Or like a March hare mad.

1 ' For those faces.'

2 ' For my sweet Molly Mog.'

3 ' When Molly comes up with the liquor.'

Round as a hoop the bumpers flow ; 5
I drink, yet can't forget her ;
For tho' as drunk as David's sow,
I love her still the better.

Pert as a pear-monger I'd be,
If Molly were but kind ; 10
Cool as a cucumber could see
The rest of womankind.

Like a stuck pig I gaping stare,
And eye her o'er and o'er ;
Lean as a rake with sighs and care, 15
Sleek as mouse before.

Plump as a partridge was I known,
And soft as silk my skin,
My cheeks as fat as butter grown ;
But as a goat now thin ! 20

I melancholy as a cat,
Am kept awake to weep ;
But she, insensible of that,
Sound as a top can sleep.

Hard is her heart as flint or stone, 25
She laughs to see me pale,
And merry as a grig is grown,
And brisk as bottled ale.

The God of Love at her approach
Is busy as a bee. 30
Hearts sound as any bell or roach,
Are smit and sigh like me.

Ah me ! as thick as hops or hail,
The fine men crowd about her ;
But soon as dead as a door-nail 35
Shall I be if without her.

Straight as my leg her shape appears ;
O were we join'd together !
My heart would be scot-free from cares,
And lighter than a feather. 40

As fine as five-pence is her mien,
No drum was ever tighter ;
Her glance is as the razor keen,
And not the sun is brighter.

As soft as pap her kisses are, 45
Methinks I taste them yet ;
Brown as a berry is her hair,
Her eyes as black as jet :

As smooth as glass, as white as curds,
Her pretty hand invites ; 50
Sharp as a needle are her words,
Her wit like pepper, bites :

Brisk as a body-louse she trips,
Clean as a penny drest ;
Sweet as a rose her breath and lips, 55
Round as the globe her breast.

Full as an egg was I with glee ;
And happy as a king.
Good L—d ! how all men envied me !
She loved like any thing. 60

But false as hell, she, like the wind,
 Changed, as her sex must do ;
 Tho' seeming as the turtle kind,
 And like the gospel true.

If I and Molly could agree, 65
 Let who would take Peru !
 Great as an emp'ror should I be,
 And richer than a Jew ;

Till you grow tender as a chick 70
 I'm dull as any post ;
 Let us like burs together stick,
 And warm as any toast.

You'll know me truer than a die,
 And wish me better sped ;
 Flat as a flounder when I lie, 75
 And as a herring dead.

Sure as a gun, she'll drop a tear
 And sigh perhaps and wish,
 When I am rotten as a pear,
 And mute as any fish. 80

A BALLAD ON ALE

I

WHILST some in Epic streams delight,
 Whilst others Pastorals invite,
 As taste or whim prevail ;

Assist me, all ye tuneful Nine,
Support me in the great design, 5
To sing of nappy ale.

II

Some folks of Cyder make a rout,
And Cyder's well enough, no doubt,
When better liquors fail ;
But wine, that's richer, better still, 10
Ev'n wine itself (deny 't who will)
Must yield to nappy ale.

III

Rum, brandy, gin, with choicest smack
From Holland brought, Batavia 'arrack,
All these will nought avail 15
To cheer a truly British heart,
And lively spirits to impart,
Like humming nappy ale.

IV

Oh ! whether thee I closely hug
In honest can, or nut-brown jug, 20
Or in the tankard hail ;
In barrel, or in bottle pent,
I give the gen'rous spirit vent,
Still may I feast on ale.

V

But chief when to the cheerful glass, 25
From vessel pure thy streamlets pass,
Then most thy charms prevail ;

Then, then, I'll bet and take the odds,
 That nectar, drink of heathen gods,
 Was poor, compared to ale. 30

VI

Give me a bumper, fill it up.
 See how it sparkles in the cup,
 O how shall I regale !
 Can any taste this drink divine,
 And then compare rum, brandy, wine, 35
 Or aught with nappy ale ?

VII

Inspired by thee the warrior fights,
 The lover woos, the poet writes,
 And pens the pleasing tale ;
 And still in Britain's isle confess'd 40
 Nought animates the patriot's breast
 Like gen'rous nappy ale.

VIII

High church and low oft raise a strife,
 And oft endanger limb and life,
 Each studious to prevail ; 45
 Yet Whig and Tory opposite
 In all things else do both unite
 In praise of nappy ale.

IX

Inspired by thee shall Crispin sing,
 Or talk of freedom, church, and king, 50
 And balance Europe's scale ;

While his rich landlord lays out his schemes
Of wealth, in golden South Sea dreams,
Th' effects of nappy ale.

X

O blest potation ! still by thee, 55
And thy companion Liberty,
Do health and mirth prevail ;
Then let us crown the can, the glass,
And sportive bid the minutes pass
In quaffing nappy ale. 60

XI

Ev'n while these stanzas I indite,
The bar-bell's grateful sounds invite
Where joy can never fail !
Adieu ! my muse adieu ! I haste
To gratify my longing taste, 65
With copious draughts of ALE.

SONGS FROM THE PLAYS

'THE MOHOCKS' (1712)

I. A SONG (SCENE I.)

The Mohocks stand in a circle, with the glasses in their hands

COME fill up the glass !
 Round, round, let it pass,
 'Till our reason be lost in our wine :
 Leave conscience's rules
 To women and fools,
 This only can make us divine.

Chorus. Then a Mohock, a Mohock I'll be,
 No laws shall restrain
 Our libertine reign,
 We'll riot, drink on, and be free.

[All drink.]

We will scour the town,
 Knock the constable down,
 Put the watch and the beadle to flight :
 We'll force all we meet
 To kneel down at our feet,
 And own this great prince of the night.

Chorus. Then a Mohock, a Mohock, etc.

[All drink.]

The Grand Seignor shall own
His seraglio outdone,
For all womankind is our booty ;
No condition we spare,
Be they brown, black or fair,
We make them fall down, and do duty.

Chorus. Then a Mohock, a Mohock I'll be,
No laws shall restrain
Our libertine reign
We'll riot, drink on, and be free. [*All drink.*
[*Exeunt.*

II. CHORUS IN SCENE II.

Enter the Mohocks singing.

'Tis wine and a whore,
That we Mohocks adore,
We'll drink 'till our senses we quench ;
When the liquor is in,
We're heighten'd for sin ;
Then heigh ! for a brisk jolly wench.
Fa, la, la, la.

THE WIFE OF BATH (1713)¹I. SONG [*Alison* ('*the wife of Bath*') I. 1.]

THEN who would not be a bride?
 Then who would not be a bride?
 For the sweetest kiss
 Is not half of her bliss:
 This all will say—who have tried.

II. A TOAST [*Alison. Act II.*]

The maiden and the bachelor,
 Pardie! —are simple elves,
 And 'till they grow to man and wife,
 Know nothing of themselves.

Then since we're each other's by nature design'd
 Let's unite, and our knowledge improve;
 Here's a health to the lass that is passively kind,
 And the youth that is active in love. [*Drinks.*]

III. STANZAS,

UPON A FAIR LADY MAKING ME HAPPY

[*Written by Doggrell and read by Chaucer in Act IV.*]

Ye gods! did Jove e'er taste such charms,
 When prest in fair Alcmena's arms,
 O ye immortal powers!

¹ None of the verses here printed—except Stanzas 1 and 2 of No. III.—appear in the revised and altered edition of the play produced at the Lincoln's Inn Theatre in 1730.

For he in all his triple night,
Did ne'er enjoy such soft delight
As I in half a one of yours.

Beneath the sable veil's disguise,
Had you not hid your killing eyes,
It had been worse for me.
My Nun had then appear'd like Jove,
I had been light'ning-struck for love,
And died like Semele.

O ecstasy ! what wit can tell,
Those charms that lie beneath your veil
Those lightnings of your eye ?
No longer then your beauty shroud,
Nor place the sun behind a cloud,
For ah ! fair Nun, I faint, I die.

IV. VERSES [*Read by Chaucer. Act V. Sc. 1.*]

Daphne, a coy and foolish dame,
Flew from Apollo's charms,
Had he confess'd in verse his flame,
She'd flown into his arms.

Whenever Orpheus touch'd the lyre,
Or sang melodious airs,
He made the very stones admire,
And tamed the fiercest bears.

Are ladies' hearts more hard than stone,
Are wolves and bears less fierce ?
Then, pr'ythee, nymph, no longer frown,
But own the power of verse.

v. SONG [*Alison. Act V.*]

I

There was a swain full fair,
 Was tripping it o'er the grass,
 And there he spied, with her nut-brown hair,
 A pretty, tight country lass.
 Fair damsel, says he, 5
 With an air brisk and free,
 Come let us each other know ;
 She blush'd in his face,
 And replied with a grace,
 Pray forbear, Sir :—no, no, no, no. 10

II

The lad being bolder grown,
 Endeavour'd to steal a kiss,
 She cried, pish !—let me alone,
 But held up her nose for the bliss.
 And when he begun, 15
 She would never have done,
 But unto his lips she did grow,
 Near smother'd to death,
 As soon as she 'd breath,
 She stammer'd out, no, no, no, no. 20

III

Come, come, says he, pretty maid,
 Let's walk to yon private grove,
 Cupid always delights in the cooling shade
 There, I'll read thee a lesson of love.

She mends her pace, 25
 And hastes to the place,
 But if her love-lecture you'd know ;
 Let a bashful young muse
 Plead the maiden's excuse,
 And answer you,—no, no, no, no. 30

'THE WHAT D'YE CALL IT' (1715)

I.—A SONG (*Sung dismally by a Ghost*)

[Act I. Scene 4.]

YE goblins and fairies,
 With frisks and vagaries,
 Ye fairies and goblins,
 With hoppings and hobblings,
 Come all, come all, 5
 To Sir Roger's great hall.

All fairies and goblins,
 All goblins and fairies,
 With hoppings and hobblings,
 With frisks and vagaries. 10

Chorus.

Sing, goblins and fairies,
 Sing, fairies and goblins,
 With frisks and vagaries,
 And hoppings and hobblings.

[*The ghosts dance round the Justices, who go off in a fright, and the ghosts vanish.*]

II.—A BALLAD (*Sung by Susan*)

[Act II. Scene 8.]

I

'TWAS when the seas were roaring
 With hollow blasts of wind ;
 A damsel lay deploring,
 All on a rock reclined.
 Wide o'er the rolling billows
 She cast a wistful look ;
 Her head was crown'd with willows
 That tremble o'er the brook.

5

II

Twelve months are gone and over,
 And nine long tedious days.
 Why didst thou, vent'rous lover,
 Why didst thou trust the seas ?
 Cease, cease, thou cruel ocean,
 And let my lover rest :
 Ah ! what 's thy troubled motion
 To that within my breast ?

10

15

III

The merchant, robb'd of pleasure,
 Sees tempests in despair ;
 But what 's the loss of treasure
 To losing of my dear ?
 Should you some coast be laid on
 Where gold and di'monds grow,
 You 'd find a richer maiden,
 But none that loves you so.

20

IV

How can they say that Nature 25
Has nothing made in vain ;
Why then beneath the water
Should hideous rocks remain ?
No eyes the rocks discover
That lurk beneath the deep, 30
To wreck the wand'ring lover,
And leave the maid to weep.

V

All melancholy lying,
Thus wail'd she for her dear ;
Repaid each blast with sighing, 35
Each billow with a tear ;
When, o'er the white wave stooping,
His floating corpse she spied ;
Then like a lily drooping,
She bow'd her head and died. 40

'THE BEGGAR'S OPERA' (1728)

AIR I.—PEACHUM

An old woman clothed in grey, etc.

THROUGH all the employments of life,
Each neighbour abuses his brother ;
Whore and rogue they call husband and wife ;
All professions be-rogue one another.

The priest calls the lawyer a cheat ;
 The lawyer be-knaves the divine ;
 And the statesman, because he 's so great,
 Thinks his trade is as honest as mine. 5

AIR II.—FILCH

The bonny grey-eyed Morn, etc.

'Tis woman that seduces all mankind !
 By her we first were taught the wheedling arts :
 Her very eyes can cheat ; when most she 's kind,
 She tricks us of our money, with our hearts.
 For her, like wolves by night, we roam for prey, 5
 And practise every fraud to bribe her charms ;
 For suits of love, like law, are won by pay,
 And beauty must be fee'd into our arms.

AIR III.—MRS. PEACHUM

Cold and Raw, etc.

If any wench Venus's girdle wear,
 Though she be never so ugly ;
 Lilies and roses will quickly appear,
 And her face look wond'rous smuggly.
 Beneath the left ear so fit but a cord 5
 (A rope so charming a zone is !)
 The youth in his cart hath the air of a lord,
 And we cry, There dies an Adonis.

AIR IV.—MRS. PEACHUM

Why is your faithful slave disdain'd, etc.

If love the virgin's heart invade,
How like a moth the simple maid
Still plays about the flame !
If soon she be not made a wife,
Her honour's singed, and then for life, 5
She's—what I dare not name.

AIR V.—MRS. PEACHUM

Of all the simple things we do, etc.

A maid is like the golden ore,
Which hath guineas intrinsical in 't,
Whose worth is never known, before
It is tried and imprest in the Mint.
A wife's like a guinea in gold, 5
Stamp'd with the name of her spouse ;
Now here, now there ; is bought, or is sold ;
And is current in every house.

AIR VI.—POLLY

What shall I do to show how much I love her? etc.

Virgins are like the fair flower in its lustre,
Which in the garden enamels the ground ;
Near it the bees in play flutter and cluster,
And gaudy butterflies frolic around.

But when once pluck'd 'tis no longer alluring, 5
 To Covent Garden 'tis sent (as yet sweet),
 There fades, and shrinks, and grows past all enduring,
 Rots, stinks, and dies, and is trod under feet.

AIR VII.—MRS. PEACHUM

Oh, London is a fine town

Our Polly is a sad slut! nor heeds what we have
 taught her,
 I wonder any man alive will ever rear a daughter!
 For she must have both hoods and gowns, and hoops,
 to swell her pride,
 With scarves and stays, and gloves and lace, and she
 will have men beside;
 And when she's dress'd with care and cost, all
 tempting, fine, and gay, 5
 As men should serve a cucumber, she flings herself
 away.

Our Polly is a sad slut, etc.

AIR VIII.—POLLY

Grim king of the Ghosts, etc.

Can love be controll'd by advice?
 Will Cupid our mothers obey?
 Though my heart was as frozen as ice,
 At his flame 'twould have melted away.

When he kiss'd me, so closely he press'd, 5
 'Twas so sweet, that I must have complied,
 So I thought it both safest and best
 To marry, for fear you should chide.

AIR IX.—MRS. PEACHUM AND POLLY

O Jenny, O Jenny, where hast thou been?

MRS. P. O Polly, you might have toy'd and kiss'd ;
 By keeping men off, you keep them on.

POLLY. But he so teased me,
 And he so pleased me,
 What I did, you must have done. 5

AIR X.—POLLY

Thomas, I cannot, etc.

I like a ship in storms was toss'd,
 Yet afraid to put into land.
 For seized in the port, the vessel's lost,
 Whose treasure is contraband.
 The waves are laid, 5
 My duty's paid ;
 O joy beyond expression !
 Thus safe ashore,
 I ask no more ;
 My all is in my possession. 10

AIR XI.—PEACHUM

A Soldier and a Sailor

A fox may steal your hens, sir,
 A whore your health and pence, sir,
 Your daughter rob your chest, sir,
 Your wife may steal your rest, sir,
 A thief your goods and plate, 5
 But this is all but picking ;
 With rest, pence, chest, and chicken,
 It ever was decreed, sir,
 If lawyer's hand is fee'd, sir,
 He steals your whole estate. 10

AIR XII.—POLLY

Now ponder well ye parents dear.

Oh, ponder well ! be not severe ;
 So save a wretched wife :
 For on the rope that hangs my dear,
 Depends poor Polly's life.

AIR XIII.—POLLY

Le printemps rappelle aux armes

The turtle thus with plaintive crying,
 Her lover dying,
 The turtle thus with plaintive crying
 Laments her dove.
 Down she drops quite spent with sighing, 5
 Pair'd in death as pair'd in love.

AIR XIV.—MACHEATH AND POLLY

Pretty Parrot say

MAC. Pretty Polly, say,
 When I was away,
 Did your fancy never stray
 To some newer lover?

POLLY. Without disguise, 5
 Heaving sighs,
 Doating eyes,
 My constant heart discover.

MAC. Fondly let me loll!
 O pretty, pretty Poll! 10

AIR XV.—MACHEATH

Pray, fair one, be kind

My heart was so free,
 It roved like the bee,
 Till Polly my passion requited;
 I sipp'd each flower,
 I changed ev'ry hour, 5
 But here ev'ry flower is united.

AIR XVI.—MACHEATH AND POLLY

Over the hills and far away

MAC. Were I laid on Geenland's coast,
 And in my arms embraced my lass,
 Warm amidst eternal frost,
 Too soon the half-year's night would pass.

POLLY. Were I sold on Indian soil, 5
 Soon as the burning day was closed,
 I could mock the sultry toil,
 When on my charmer's breast reposed.

MAC. And I would love you all the day,
 POLLY. Every night would kiss and play ; 10
 MAC. If with me you 'd fondly stray
 POLLY. Over the hills and far away.

AIR XVII.—POLLY

Gin thou wert mine awn thing

O what pain it is to part !
 Can I leave thee, can I leave thee ?
 O what pain it is to part !
 Can thy Polly ever leave thee ?
 But lest Death my love should thwart, 5
 And bring thee to the fatal cart,
 Thus I tear thee from my bleeding heart !
 Fly hence, and let me leave thee.

AIR XVIII.—MACHEATH AND POLLY

[Parting and looking back at each other with fondness ; he at one door, she at the other.]

O the broom, etc.

MAC. The miser thus a shilling sees,
 Which he 's obliged to pay ;
 With sighs resigns it by degrees,
 And fears 'tis gone for aye.

POLLY. The boy thus, when his sparrow's flown, 5
The bird in silence eyes ;
But as soon as out of sight 'tis gone,
Whines, whimpers, sobs, and cries.

ACT II

AIR I.—MATT

Fill ev'ry glass, etc.

FILL ev'ry glass, for wine inspires us,
And fires us,
With courage, love, and joy.
Women and wine should life employ ;
Is there aught else on earth desirous? 5

Chorus. Fill every glass, etc.

AIR II.—MARCH IN RINALDO WITH DRUMS AND TRUMPETS

Mat o' the Mint and Gang

Let us take the road ;
Hark ! I hear the sound of coaches,
The hour of attack approaches,
To your arms, brave boys, and load.
See the ball I hold ! 5
Let the chemists toil like asses,
Our fire their fire surpasses,
And turns all our lead to gold.

Let us drink and sport to-day,
 Our's is not to-morrow ; 10
 Love with youth flies swift away,
 Age is nought but sorrow.
 Dance and sing,
 Time's on the wing,
 Life never knows the return of spring. 15

Chorus. Let us drink, etc.

AIR V.—JENNY

All in a misty morning, etc.

Before the barn-door crowing,
 The cock by hens attended,
 His eyes around him throwing,
 Stands for a while suspended.
 Then one he singles from the crew, 5
 And cheers the happy hen ;
 With how do you do, and how do you do,
 And how do you do again.

AIR VI.—JENNY

When once I lay with another man's wife, etc.

The gamesters and lawyers are jugglers alike,
 If they meddle your all is in danger.
 Like gypsies, if once they can finger a souse,
 Your pockets they pick and they pilfer your house,—
 And give your estate to a stranger. 5

AIR VII.—MACHEATH

When first I laid siege to my Chloris

At the tree I shall suffer with pleasure,
At the tree I shall suffer with pleasure ;

Let me go where I will,

In all kinds of ill,

I shall find no such furies as these are.

5

AIR VIII.—MACHEATH

Courtiers, courtiers, think it no harm

Man may escape from rope and gun,

Nay, some have outlived the doctor's pill,

Who takes a woman must be undone,

That basilisk is sure to kill.

The fly, that sips treacle, is lost in the sweets, 5

So he that tastes woman, woman, woman,

He that tastes woman, ruin meets.

AIR IX.—LUCY

A lovely lass to a friar came, etc.

Thus, when a good housewife sees a rat,

In her trap, in the morning taken,

Vith pleasure her heart goes pit-a-pat,

In revenge for her loss of bacon.

Then she throws him

To the dog or cat,

To be worried, crush'd, and shaken.

5

AIR X.—LUCY

'Twas when the sea was roaring

How cruel are the traitors,
Who lie and swear in jest,
To cheat unguarded creatures
Of virtue, fame and rest !
Whoever steals a shilling 5
Through shame the guilt conceals :
In love the perjured villain
With boasts the theft reveals.

AIR XI.—MACHEATH

The sun had loosed his weary beams, etc.

The first time at the looking-glass
The mother sets her daughter,
The image strikes the smiling lass
With self-love ever after.
Each time she looks, she fonder grown, 5
Thinks every charm grows stronger ;
But, alas, vain maid ! all eyes but your own
Can see you are not younger.

AIR XII.—LOCKIT

How happy are we, etc.

When you censure the age,
Be cautious and sage,
Lest the courtiers offended should be ;

If you mention vice or bribe,
 'Tis so pat to all the tribe, 5
 Each cries—That was levell'd at me.

AIR XIII.—LUCY

Of a noble race was Shenkin

Is then his fate decreed, sir ?
 Such a man can I think of quitting ?
 When first we met, so moves me yet,
 Oh, see how my heart is splitting !

AIR XIV.—LOCKIT

You 'll think, ere many days ensue,
 This sentence not severe ;
 I hang your husband, child, 'tis true,
 But with him hang your care,
 Twang dang dillo dee. 5

AIR XV.—MACHEATH

London Ladies

If you at an office solicit your due,
 And would not have matters neglected ;
 You must quicken the clerk with the perquisite too
 To do what his duty directed.
 Or would you the frowns of a lady prevent, 5
 She too has this palpable failing,
 The perquisite softens her into consent ;
 That reason with all is prevailing.

AIR XVI.—POLLY

All in the Downs, etc.

Thus when the swallow, seeking prey,
Within the sash is closely pent,
His consort, with bemoaning lay,
Without sits pining for th' event,
Her chatt'ring lovers all around her skim ;
She heeds them not (poor bird !), her soul 's with him.

AIR XVII.—MACHEATH

Have you heard of a frolicsome ditty? etc.

How happy could I be with either,
Were t'other dear charmer away ;
But while you thus tease me together,
To neither a word will I say ;
But toll de rol, etc.

AIR XVIII.—POLLY AND LUCY

Irish Trot

POLLY. I 'm bubbled.

LUCY. I 'm bubbled.

POLLY. Oh, how I am troubled !

LUCY. Bamboozled and bit.

POLLY. My distresses are doubled.

LUCY. When you come to the tree, should the hang-
man refuse,
These fingers with pleasure could fasten the
noose.

POLLY. I 'm bubbled, etc.

AIR XIX.—POLLY

Cease your funning :
 Force or cunning
 Never shall my heart trepan ;
 All these sallies
 Are but malice, 5
 To seduce my constant man.

'Tis most certain,
 By their flirting,
 Women oft have envy shown ;
 Pleased to ruin 10
 Other's wooing,
 Never happy in their own.

AIR XX.—LUCY AND POLLY

Good morrow, Gossip Joan

LUCY. Why, how now, Madam Flirt ?
 If you thus must chatter,
 And are for flinging dirt,
 Let 's try who best can spatter,
 Madam Flirt ?

POLLY. Why, how now, saucy jade ? 6
 Sure the wench is tipsy ?
 How can you see me made [*To Macheath*
 The scoff of such a gipsy ?
 Saucy Jade ! 10
 [*To Lucy*

AIR XXI.—POLLY

Irish Howl

No power on earth can e'er divide
The knot that secret love hath tied ;
When parents draw against our mind.
The true-love's knot they faster bind.
Oh, oh, ray, oh, Amborah. Oh, oh, etc.

AIR XXII.—LUCY

The Lass of Patie's Mill, etc.

I like the fox shall grieve,
Whose mate hath left her side ;
Whom hounds from morn to eve,
Chase o'er the country wide.
Where can my lover hide? 5
Where cheat the weary pack?
If love be not his guide,
He never will come back.

ACT III

AIR I.—LUCY

If love's a sweet passion, etc.

When young at the bar you first taught me to score,
And bid me be free of my lips and no more ;
I was kiss'd by the parson, the squire, and the sot,
When the guest was departed the kiss was forgot.
But his kiss was so sweet, and so closely he prest, 5
That I languish'd and pined till I granted the rest.

AIR II.—LUCY

South-Sea Ballad

My love is all madness and folly ;
 Alone I lie,
 Toss, tumble and cry,
 What a happy creature is Polly !
 Was e'er such a wretch as I ? 5
 With rage I redden like scarlet,
 That my dear inconstant varlet,
 Stark blind to my charms,
 Is lost in the arms
 Of that jilt, that inveigling harlot ! 10
 Stark blind to my charms,
 Is lost in the arms
 Of that jilt, that inveigling harlot !
 This, this my resentment alarms.

AIR III.—LOCKIT

Packington's Pound

Thus gamesters united in friendship are found,
 Though they know that their industry all is a cheat ;
 They flock to their prey at the dice box's sound,
 And join to promote one another's deceit.
 But if by mishap 5
 They fail of a chap
 To keep in their hands, they each other entrap.
 Like pikes, lank with hunger, who miss of their ends,
 They bite their companions and prey on their friends.

AIR IV.—MACHEATH

Lillibullero

The modes of the court so common are grown,
That a true friend can hardly be met ;
Friendship for interest is but a loan,
Which they let out for what they can get,
'Tis true you find 5
Some friends so kind,
Who will give you good counsel themselves to defend
In sorrowful ditty
They promise, they pity,
But shift you for money from friend to friend. 10

AIR V.—LOCKIT

Down in the North Country, etc.

What gudgeons are we men !
Ev'ry woman's easy prey,
Though we have felt the hook again
We bite and they betray.

The bird that hath been trapt, 5
When he hears his calling mate,
To her he flies, again he's clapt
Within the wiry grate.

AIR VI.—TRAPES

A Shepherd kept sheep, etc.

In the days of my youth I could bill like a
 dove, fa, la, la, etc.
 Like a sparrow at all times was ready
 for love, fa, la, la, etc.
 The life of all mortals in kissing should pass, 5
 Lip to lip while we're young—then the lip to
 the glass, fa, la, la, etc.

AIR VII.—LUCY

One evening having lost my way

I am like a skiff on the ocean tost,
 Now high, now low, with each billow borne,
 With her rudder broke and her anchor lost,
 Deserted and all forlorn.
 While thus I lie rolling and tossing all night, 5
 That Polly lies sporting on seas of delight !
 Revenge, revenge, revenge,
 Shall appease my restless sprite.

AIR VIII.—LUCY

Now, Roger, I'll tell thee because thou'rt my son

When a wife 's in the pout
 (As she 's sometimes, no doubt),
 The good husband, as meek as a lamb,

Her vapours to still,
First grants her her will, 5
And the quieting draught is a dram ;
Poor man ! and the quieting draught is a dram.

AIR IX.—POLLY AND LUCY

O Bessy Bell

POLLY. A curse attends that woman's love
Who always would be pleasing.
LUCY. The pertness of the billing dove
Like tickling is but teasing.
POLLY. What then in love can woman do ? 5
LUCY. If we grow fond they shun us.
POLLY. And when we fly them, they pursue,
LUCY. But leave us when they 've won us.

AIR X.—POLLY

Would Fate to me Belinda give

Among the men, coquets we find,
Who court by turns all woman-kind ;
And we grant all their hearts desired
When they are flatter'd and admired.

AIR XI.—LUCY

Come, sweet lass, etc.

Come, sweet lass,
Let 's banish sorrow
Till to-morrow ;

Come, sweet lass,
 Let's take a chirping glass. 5
 Wine can clear
 The vapours of despair,
 And make us light as air ;
 Then drink and banish care.

AIR XII.—POLLY AND LUCY

The last time I went o'er the moor

POLLY. Hither, dear husband, turn your eyes !
 LUCY. Bestow one glance to cheer me !
 POLLY. Think, with that look, thy Polly dies.
 LUCY. Oh ! shun me not, but hear me !
 POLLY. 'Tis Polly sues. 5
 LUCY. 'Tis Lucy speaks.
 POLLY. Is that true love requited ?
 LUCY. My heart is bursting !
 POLLY. Mine too, breaks !
 LUCY. Must I—— 10
 POLLY. Must I be slighted ?

AIR XIII.—MACHEATH

Tom Tinker's my true love

Which way shall I turn me ? how can I decide ?
 Wives, the day of our death, are as fond as a bride.
 One wife is too much for most husbands to hear,
 But two at a time, there's no mortal can bear !
 This way, and that way, and which way I will, 5
 What would comfort the one, t'other wife would
 take ill !

AIR XIV.—POLLY

I am a poor shepherd undone

When my hero in court appears.
 And stands arraign'd for his life,
 Then think of poor Polly's tears,
 For ah ! poor Polly's his wife.
 Like the sailor, he holds up his hand, 5
 Distress'd on the dashing wave ;
 To die a dry death at land
 Is as bad as a wat'ry grave.
 And alas, poor Polly !
 Alack, and well-a-day ! 10
 Before I was in love,
 Oh, ev'ry month was May !

AIR XV.—LUCY

Ianthe the lovely, etc.

When he holds up his hand, arraign'd for his life,
 O think of your daughter, and think I'm his wife !
 What are cannons or bombs, or clashing of swords ?
 For death is more certain by witness's words. 4
 Then nail up their lips ; that dread thunder allay ;
 And each month of my life will hereafter be May.

AIR XVI.—LOCKIT

Ourselves, like the great, to secure a retreat,
 When matters require it, must give up our gang :
 And good reason why,
 Or instead of the fry,
 Ev'n Peachum and I, 5
 Like poor petty rascals might hang, hang ;
 Like poor petty rascals hang.

AIR XVII.—MACHEATH

Bonny Dundee

The charge is prepared, the lawyers are met,
 The judges all ranged ; a terrible show ;
 I go undismay'd, for death is a debt—
 A debt on demand, so take what I owe.
 Then, farewell my love ; dear charmers, adieu !
 Contented I die ; 'tis the better for you. 6
 Here ends all dispute, for the rest of our lives,
 For this way at once, I please all my wives.

AIRS XVIII. to XXVII. (MEDLEY)—MACHEATH

Happy Groves

Oh, cruel, cruel, cruel case !
 Must I suffer this disgrace ?

Of all the girls that are so smart

Of all the friends in time of grief,
 When threat'ning death looks grimmer,
 Not one so sure can bring relief,
 As this best friend, a brimmer. [Drinks.

Britons strike home

Since I must swing, I scorn,—I scorn to wince or
 whine : [Rises.

Chevy Chase

But now again my spirits sink,
 I'll raise them high with wine. [Drinks.

To old Sir Simon the king

But valour the stronger grows,
The stronger liquor we're drinking ;
And how can we feel our woes,
When we've lost the trouble of thinking?
[Drinks.]

Joy to Great Caesar

If thus a man can die,
Much bolder with brandy.
[Pours out a bumper of brandy.]

There was an old woman, etc.

So I drink of this bumper? and now I can stand the
test,
And my comrades shall see that I die as brave as the
best. [Drinks.]

Did you ever hear of a gallant sailor?

But can I leave my pretty hussies
Without one tear or tender sigh?
Why are mine eyes still flowing?
Their eyes, their lips, their busses,
Recall my love :—Ah ! must I die? 5

Green sleeves

Since laws were made for every degree,
To curb vice in others, as well as me,
I wonder we ha'n't better company
Upon Tyburn tree.
But gold from law can take out the sting ; 5
And if rich men, like us, were to swing,
'Twould thin the land, such numbers to string
Upon Tyburn tree.

AIR XXVIII.—LUCY, POLLY AND MACHEATH

All you that must take a leap, etc.

LUCY. Would I might be hang'd ?

POLLY. And I would so too !

LUCY. To be hang'd with you.

POLLY. My dear, with you. 4

MAC. Oh, leave me to thought ! I fear—I doubt !
I tremble—I droop ! See, my cour-
age is out.

[Turns up the empty bottle.]

LUCY. No token of love ?

MAC. See, my courage is out.

LUCY. No token of love. 10

POLLY. Adieu !

LUCY. Farewell !

MAC. But hark ! I hear the toll of the bell.

Chorus. Tol de rol lol.

AIR XXIX.—MACHEATH

Lumps of Pudding, etc.

Thus I stand like the Turk, with his doxies around,
From all sides their glances his passion confound ;
For black, brown, and fair, his inconstancy burns,
And the different beauties subdue him by turns :
Each calls forth her charms, to provoke his desires, 5
Though willing to all, with but one he retires ;
But think of this maxim, and put off all sorrow,
The wretch of to-day may be happy to-morrow.

Chorus. Then think of this maxim.

SONGS FROM 'POLLY' (1729)

AIR I.—TRAPES

The disappointed widow

THE manners of the great affect :
 Stint not your pleasure ;
 If conscience had their genius check'd,
 How got they treasure ?
 The more in debt run in debt the more, 5
 Careless who is undone :
 Morals and honesty leave to the poor,
 As they do at London.

AIR II.—DUCAT AND TRAPES

The Irish ground

(BASS)

DUCAT. What can wealth
 When we 're old ?
 Youth and health
 Are not sold.

(TREBLE)

TRAPES. When love in the pulse beats low 5
 (As haply it may with you),
 A girl can fresh youth bestow,
 And kindle desire anew.

Thus, numb'd in the brake,
 Without motion, the snake 10
 Sleeps cold winter away :
 But in every vein
 Life quickens again
 On the bosom of May.

AIR III.—DUCAT

Noel Hills

He that weds a beauty
 Soon will find her cloy ;
 When pleasure grows a duty,
 Farewell love and joy :
 He that weds for treasure 5
 (Though he hath a wife)
 Hath chose one lasting pleasure
 In a married life.

AIR IV.—FLIMZY

Sweetheart, think upon me

My conscience is of courtly mould,
 Fit for highest station.
 Where's the hand when touch'd with gold,
 Proof against temptation ?

AIR V.—TRAPES

'Twas within a furlong

In pimps and politicians
 The genius is the same ;
 Both raise their own conditions
 On others' guilt and shame :

With a tongue well tipt with lies 5
 Each the want of parts supplies,
 And with a heart that 's all disguise
 Keeps his schemes unknown.
 Seducing as the devil,
 They play the tempter's part. 10
 And have when most they 're civil,
 Most mischief in their heart.
 Each a secret commerce drives,
 First corrupts and then connives,
 And by his neighbours' vices thrives, 15
 For they are all his own.

AIR VI.—POLLY

Sortez des vos retraits

She who hath felt a real pain
 By Cupid's dart,
 Finds that all absence is in vain
 To cure her heart.
 Though from my lover cast
 Far as from pole to pole,
 Still the pure flame must last,
 For love is in the soul.

AIR VII.—POLLY

O waly, waly, upon the bank

Farewell, farewell, all hopes of bliss !
 For Polly always must be thine.
 Shall then my heart be ever his,
 Which never can again be mine?

O love, you play a cruel part, 5
 Thy shaft still festers in the wound ;
 You should reward a constant heart,
 Since 'tis, alas, so seldom found !

AIR VIII.—TRAPES

O Jenny, come tie me

Despair is all folly,
 Hence, melancholy,
 Fortune attends you while youth is in flower.
 By beauty's possession
 Used with discretion, 5
 Woman at all times hath joy in her power.

AIR IX.—MRS. DUCAT

Red House

I will have my humours, I'll please all my senses,
 I will not be stinted—in love or expenses.
 I'll dress with profusion, I'll game without measure,
 You shall have the business, I will have the pleasure :
 Thus every day I'll pass my life,
 My home shall be my least resort ;
 For sure 'tis fitting that your wife
 Should copy ladies of the court.

AIR X.—DUCAT

Old Orpheus tickled, etc.

When billows come breaking on the strand,
 The rocks are deaf and unshaken stand :

Old oaks can defy the thunder's roar,
 And I can stand woman's tongue—that's more.
 With a twinkum, twankum, etc. 5

AIR XI.—DUCAT AND MRS. DUCAT

Christ-Church Bells

When a woman jealous grows,
 Farewell, all peace of life !
 MRS. DUCAT. But ere man roves he should pay
 What he owes,
 And with her due content his wife. 5
 DUCAT. 'Tis man's the weaker sex to sway.
 MRS. D. We too, whene'er we list, obey.
 DUCAT. 'Tis just and fit
 You should submit.
 MRS. D. But sweet kind husband—not to-day.
 DUCAT. Let your clack be still. 11
 MRS. D. Not till I have my will.
 If thus you reason slight,
 There's never an hour
 While breath has power, 51
 But I will assert my right.

AIR XII.—DAMARIS

Cheshire rounds

When kings by their huffing
 Have blown up a squabble,
 All the charge and cuffing
 Light upon the rabble.

Thus when man and wife 5
 By their mutual snubbing,
 Kindle civil strife,
 Servants get the drubbing.

AIR XIII.—POLLY

The bush aboon Traquair

The crow or daw through all the year
 No fowler seeks to ruin ;
 But birds of voice or feather rare,
 He 's all day long pursuing.
 Beware, fair maids, to 'scape the net 5
 That other beauties fell in ;
 For sure at heart was never yet
 So great a wretch as Helen !

AIR XIV.—POLLY AND DUCAT

Bury Fair

POLLY. How can you be so teasing ?
 DUCAT. Love will excuse my fault,
 How can you be so pleasing ?
[Going to kiss her.]
 POLLY. I vow I 'll not be naught.
 DUCAT. All maids I know at first resist. [*Struggling.*]
 A master may command. 6
 POLLY. You 're monstrous rude ; I 'll not be kiss'd :
 Nay, fie, let go my hand.
 DUCAT. 'Tis foolish pride——
 POLLY. 'Tis vile, 'tis base,
 Poor innocence to wrong. 10

DUCAT. I'll force you.

POLLY. Guard me from disgrace!

You find that virtue's strong.

[*Pushing him away.*]

AIR XV.—DUCAT

Bobbing Joan

Maids like courtiers must be woo'd ;

Most by flattery are subdued ;

Some capricious, coy, or nice,

Out of pride protract the vice,

But they fall,

5

One and all,

When we bid up to their price.

AIR XVI.—POLLY

A swain long tortured with disdain

Can I or toil or hunger fear?

For love's a pain that's more severe.

The slave, with virtue in his breast,

Can wake in peace, and sweetly rest.

AIR XVII.—DUCAT, MRS. DUCAT AND SERVANT

March in Scipio

DUCAT. Brave boys, prepare. [To the men.

Ah ! cease, fond wife, to cry. [To her.

- SERV. For when the danger's near,
We've time enough to fly.
- MRS. D. How can you be disgraced? 5
For wealth secures your fame.
- SERV. The rich are always placed
Above the sense of shame.
- MRS. D. Let honour spur the slave
To fight for fighting's sake : 10
- DUCAT. But even the rich are brave
When money is at stake.

AIR XVIII.—DAMARIS

Jig it o' Foot

- Better to doubt
All that's doing,
Than to find out
Proofs of ruin.
- What servants hear and see 5
Should they tattle,
Marriage all day would be
Feuds and battle.

AIR XIX.—MRS. DUCAT

Trumpet Minuet

Abroad after misses most husbands will roam,
Tho' sure they find woman sufficient at home.
To be nosed by a strumpet ! Hence, hussy, you'd best.
Would he give me my due, I would give her the rest.

AIR XX.—DAMARIS

Polwarth on the Green

Love now is nought but art,
 'Tis who can juggle best;
 To all men seem to give your heart,
 But keep it in your breast.
 What gain and pleasure do we find, 5
 Who change when'er we list!
 The mill that turns with every wind
 Must bring the owner grist.

AIR XXI.—POLLY

St. Martin's Lane

As pilgrims thro' devotion
 To some shrine pursue their way,
 They tempt the raging ocean,
 And thro' deserts stray.
 With zeal their hope desiring 5
 The saint their breast inspiring.
 With cheerful air,
 Devoid of fear,
 They every danger bear.
 Thus equal zeal possessing, 10
 I seek my only blessing.
 O love, my honest vow regard!
 My truth protect,
 My steps direct,
 His flight detect, 15
 A faithful wife reward.

ACT II

AIR XXII.—POLLY

La Villanella

WHY did you spare him,
 O'er seas to bear him,
 Far from his home and constant bride?
 When papa 'peach'd him,
 If death had reach'd him, 5
 I then had only sigh'd, wept, and died!

AIR XXIII.—POLLY

Dead March in Coriolanus

Sleep, O Sleep,
 With thy rod of incantation,
 Charm my imagination,
 Then, only then, I cease to weep.
 By thy power, 5
 The virgin by time o'ertaken,
 For years forlorn, forsaken,
 Enjoys the happy hour.
 What's to sleep?
 'Tis a visionary blessing; 10
 A dream that 's past expressing,
 Our utmost wish possessing;
 So may I always keep. [*Falls asleep.*]

AIR XXIV.—CUTLACE

Three Sheep-skins

Of all the sins that are money-supplying ;
 Consider the world, 'tis past all denying,
 With all sorts,
 In towns or courts,
 The richest sin is lying. 5

AIR XXV.—LAGUERRE

Rigadoon

By women won,
 We're all undone,
 Each wench hath a Syren's charms,
 The lover's deeds
 Are good or ill, 3
 As whim succeeds
 In woman's will :
 Resolution is lull'd in her arms.

AIR XXVI.—HACKER

Ton humeur est Catharine

Woman's like the flatt'ring ocean,
 Who her pathless ways can find ?
 Every blast directs her motion ;
 Now she's angry, now she's kind.
 What a fool's the vent'rous lover, 3
 Whirl'd and toss'd by every wind !
 Can the bark the port recover
 When the silly pilot's blind ?

AIR XXVII.—POLLY

Ye nymphs and sylvan gods

I hate those coward tribes,
 Who by mean sneaking bribes,
 By tricks and disguise,
 By flattery and lies,
 To power and grandeur rise. 5
 Like heroes of old,
 You are greatly bold.
 The sword your cause supports,
 Untaught to fawn,
 You ne'er were drawn 10
 Your truth to pawn
 Among the spawn
 Who practise the frauds of Courts.

AIR XXVIII.—CULVERIN

Minuet

Cheer up, my lads, let us push on the fray,
 For battles, like women, are lost by delay.
 Let us seize victory while in our power ;
 Alike war and love have their critical hour.
 Our hearts bold and steady 5
 Should always be ready,
 So think war a widow, a kingdom the dower.

AIR XXIX.—MORANO

Mirleton

When I'm great and flush of treasure,
 Check'd by neither fear or shame,
 You shall tread a round of pleasure,
 Morning, noon, and night the same.
 With a Mirleton, etc. 5

Like a city wife or beauty,
 You shall flutter life away ;
 And shall know no other duty
 But to dress, eat, drink and play.
 With a Mirleton, etc. 10

AIR XXX.—MORANO AND JENNY

Sawny was tall and of a noble race

MORANO. Shall I not be bold when honour calls ?
 You've a heart that would upbraid me then.
 JENNY. But ah, I fear, if my hero falls,
 Thy Jenny shall ne'er know pleasure again !
 MORANO. To deck their wives fond tradesmen cheat ; 5
 I conquer but to make thee great.
 JENNY But if my hero falls—ah then
 Thy Jenny shall ne'er know pleasure again !

AIR XXXI.—JENNY

Northern Nancy

How many men have found the skill
 Of power and wealth acquiring?
 But sure there's a time to stint the will,
 And the judgment is in retiring.
 For to be displaced, 5
 For to be disgraced,
 Is the end of too high aspiring.

AIR XXXII.—VANDERBLUFF

Amante fuggite cadente beltà

Fine women are devils, complete in their way,
 They always are roving and cruising for prey.
 When founce on their hook, their views they obtain
 Like those too their pleasure is giving us pain.

AIR XXXIII.—MORANO

Since all the world's turn'd upside down

Tho' different passions rage by turns,
 Within my breast fermenting;
 Now blazes love, now honour burns,
 I'm here, I'm there consenting.
 I'll each obey, so keep my oath, 5
 That oath by which I won her:
 With truth and steadiness in both,
 I'll act like a man of honour.

AIR XXXVI.—JENNY AND POLLY

- JENNY. We never blame the forward swain
Who puts us to the trial.
- POLLY. I know you first would give me pain,
Then baulk me with denial.
- JENNY. What mean we then by being tried? 5
- POLLY. With scorn and slight to use us.
Most beauties, to indulge their pride,
Seem kind but to refuse us.

AIR XXXVII.—JENNY

Roger a Coverly

My heart is by love forsaken,
I feel the tempest growing ;
A fury the palace hath taken,
I rage, I burn, I'm glowing.
Tho' Cupid's arrows are erring, 5
Or indifference may secure ye,
When woman's revenge is stirring,
You cannot escape that fury.

AIR XXXVIII.—MORANO

Bacchus m'a dit

By halves no friend
Now seeks to do you pleasure.
Their help they lend,
In every part of life ;

If husbands part, 5
 The friend hath always leisure ;
 Then all his heart
 Is bent to please the wife.

AIR XXXIX.—JENNY

Health to Betty

If husbands sit unsteady,
 Most wives for freaks are ready.
 Neglect the rein,
 The steed again
 Grows skittish, wild and heady. 5

AIR XL.—CAWWAWKEE

Cap de Bonne Esperance

The body of the brave may be taken,
 If chance bring on our adverse hour ;
 But the noble soul is unshaken,
 For that still is in our power ;
 'Tis a rock whose firm foundation 5
 Mocks the waves of perturbation ;
 'Tis a never-dying ray,
 Brighter in our evil day.

AIR XLI.—CAWWAWKEE

When bright Aurelia tripp'd the plain

For gold you sacrifice your fame,
 Your honour, life and friend:
 You war, yon fawn, you lie, you game,
 And plunder without fear or shame ;
 Can madness this transcend ?

AIR XLII.—JENNY

Peggy's Mill

When gold is in hand,
 It gives us command ;
 It makes us loved and respected.
 'Tis now, as of yore,
 Wit and sense, when poor, 5
 Are scorn'd, o'erlook'd and neglected.
 Tho' peevish and old,
 If women have gold,
 They have youth, good humour, and beauty :
 Among all mankind 10
 Without it we find
 Nor love, nor favour, nor duty.

RECITATIVE.—MORANO

'Via fuggite la plebe' in Coriolanus

Hence let him feel his sentence,
 Pain brings repentance.

AIR XLIII.—MORANO

Excuse me

Honour calls me from thy arms,
 With glory my bosom is beating. [*To Vanderbluff.*
 Victory summons to arms : then to arms
 Let us haste for we 're sure of defeating.
 One look more—and then— [*To Jenny.*
 O, I am lost again ! 6

AIR XLVI.—MORANO, VANDERBLUFF AND
JENNY

We've cheated the parson

- MORANO. Despair leads to battle, no courage
 so great :
 They must conquer or die who've
 no retreat.
- VANDERBLUFF. No retreat.
- JENNY. No retreat.
- MOR. They must conquer or die who've
 no retreat.

AIR XLVII.—CAWWAWKEE [STANZA REPEATED
AS DUET WITH POLLY]

T'amo tanto

Virtue's treasure
Is a pleasure,
Cheerful even amid distress ;
Nor pain nor crosses,
Nor grief nor losses,
Nor death itself can make it less
Here relying,
Suff'ring, dying,
Honest souls find all redress,

AIR XLVIII.—POLLY

Down in a Meadow

The sportsmen keep hawks, and their quarry they
gain ;

Thus the woodcock, the partridge, the pheasant, is
slain.

What care and expense for their hounds are employ'd !

Thus the fox and the hare and the stag are destroy'd.

The spaniel they cherish, whose flattering way

Can as well as heir masters cringe, fawn and betray.

Thus staunch politicians, look all the world round,

Love the men who can serve as hawk, spaniel or
hound.

AIR XLIX.—DUCAT

There was an old man and he lived

What man can on virtue or courage repose,

Or guess if the touch 'twill abide?

Like gold, if intrinsic sure nobody knows,

Till weigh'd in the balance and tried.

AIR L.—CAWWAWKEE

Iris la plus charmante

Love with beauty is flying,

At once 'tis blooming and dying ;

But all seasons defying,

Friendship lasts on the year.

Love is by long enjoying, 5
 Cloying ;
 Friendship, enjoy'd the longer,
 Stronger.
 O may the flame divine
 Burn in your breast like mine !

AIR LI.—FIRST AND SECOND PIRATE

There was a jovial beggar

1ST PIRATE. When horns, with cheerful sound,
 Proclaim the active day ;
 Impatience warms the hound,
 He burns to chase the prey.

Chorus. Thus to battle we will go, etc.

2D PIRATE. How charms the trumpet's breath ! 5
 The brave with hope possess'd,
 Forgetting wounds and death,
 Feel conquest in their breast.

Chorus. Thus to battle, etc.

AIR LII.—MORANO AND THE FIRST PIRATE

To you fair ladies

MORANO. By bolder steps we win the race.

1ST PIRATE. Let's haste where danger calls.

MOR. Unless ambition mend its pace,
 It totters, nods and falls.

1ST PIR. We must advance or be undone. 5

MOR. Think thus and then the battle's won.

Chorus. With a fa, la, la, etc.

AIR LIII.—MORANO, VANDERBLUFF AND FIRST
PIRATE*Prince Eugene's March*

- MORANO. When the tiger roams,
 And the timorous flock is in his view
 Fury foams,
 He thirsts for the blood of the crew.
 His greedy eyes he throws, 5
 Thirst with their number grows,
 On he pours with a wide waste pursuing,
 Spreading the plain with a general ruin,
 Thus let us charge, and our foes o'erturn.
- VAND. Let us on one and all! 10
- 1ST PIR. How they fly, how they fall!
- MORANO. For the war, for the prize I burn.

AIR LIV.—CAWWAWKEE

The Marlborough

We the sword of justice drawing,
 Terror cast in guilty eyes ;
 In its beam false courage dies ;
 'Tis like lightning keen and awing.
 Charge the foe, 5
 Lay them low,
 On then and strike the blow.
 Hark, victory calls us. See, guilt is dismay'd :
 The villain is of his own conscience afraid,
 In your hands are your lives and your liberties
 held. 10
 The courage of virtue was never repell'd.

RECITATIVE

- POHETOHEE. Art thou Morano, that fell man of prey?
That foe to justice?
- MORANO. Tremble and obey,
Art thou great Pohetohee styled?
- POHETOHEE. —the same 5
I dare avow my actions and my name.

AIR LV.—MORANO

Les Rats

- Know, then, war's my pleasure.
Am I thus controll'd?
Both thy heart and treasure
I'll at once unfold.
- You like a miser, scraping, hiding, 5
Rob all the world; you're but mines of gold.
Rage my breast alarms,
War is by kings held right-deciding;
Then to arms, to arms;
With this sword I'll force your hold. 10

AIR LVI.—DUCAT

Mad Robin

- How faultless does the nymph appear,
When her own hand the picture draws!
But all others only smear
Her wrinkles, cracks and flaws.
- Self-flattery is our claim and right, 5
Let men say what they will;
Sure we may set our good in sight,
When neighbours set our ill.

AIR LVII.—CAWWAWKEE

Thro' the wood, laddy

As sits the sad turtle alone on the spray ;
 His heart sorely beating,
 Sad murmur repeating,
 Indulging his grief for his consort astray ;
 For force or death only could keep her away. 5
 Now he thinks of the fowler, and every snare ;
 If guns have not slain her,
 The net must detain her,
 Thus he 'll rise in my thoughts, every hour with a tear,
 If safe from the battle he do not appear. 10

AIR LVIII.—POLLY and CAWWAWKEE

Clasp'd in my dear Melinda's arms

POLLY. Victory is ours.
 CAW. —My fond heart is at rest
 POLLY. Friendship thus receives its guest.
 CAW. O what transport fills my breast !
 POLLY. Conquest is complete. 5
 CAW. Now the triumph's great.
 POLLY. In your life is a nation blest.
 CAW. In your life I'm of all possess'd.

AIR LIX.—MORANO

Parson upon Dorothy

The soldiers, who by trade must dare
 The deadly cannon's sounds,
 You may be sure, betimes prepare
 For fatal blood and wounds.

The men who with advent'rous dance, 5
 Bound from the cord on high,
 Must own they have the frequent chance
 By broken bones to die.
 Since rarely then,
 Ambitious men, 10
 Like others lose their breath ;
 Like these, I hope,
 They know a rope
 Is but their natural death.

AIR LX.—MORANO

The collier has a daughter

When right or wrong's decided
 In war or civil causes,
 We by success are guided
 To blame or give applauses.
 Thus men exalt ambition, 5
 In power by all commended,
 But when it falls from high condition,
 Tyburn is well attended.

AIR LXI.—MORANO

Mad Moll

All crimes are judged like fornication ;
 While rich we are honest, no doubt.
 Fine ladies can keep reputation,
 Poor lasses alone are found out.

If justice had piercing eyes, 5
 Like ourselves, to look within,
 She'd find power and wealth a disguise
 That shelter the worst of our kin.

AIR LXII.—CAWWAWKEE AND POLLY

Prince George

CAW. All friendship is a mutual debt.
 POLLY. The contract's inclination.
 CAW. We never can that bond forget
 Of sweet retaliation.
 POLLY. All day and every day the same, 5
 Were are paying and still owing.
 CAW By turns we grant, by turns we claim
 The pleasure of bestowing.
 BOTH. By turns we grant, etc.

AIR LXIII.—POLLY

Blithe Jockey, young and gay

Can words the pain express
 Which absent lovers know?
 He only mine can guess,
 Whose heart hath felt the woe.
 'Tis doubt, suspicion, fear, 5
 Seldom hope, oft despair;
 'Tis jealousy, 'tis rage, in brief,
 'Tis every pang and grief.

AIR LXIV.—POLLY

In the fields in frost and snow

The modest lily, like the maid

Its pure bloom defending,

Is of noxious dews afraid,

Soon as eve's descending.

Closed all night,

Free from blight,

It preserves the native white ;

But at morn unfolds its leaves,

And the vital sun receives.

5

AIR LXV.—CAWWAWKEE

Whilst I gaze on Chloe

Whilst I gaze in fond desiring,

Every former thought is lost ;

Sighing, wishing, and admiring,

How my troubled soul is tost !

Hot and cold my blood is flowing,

How it thrills in every vein !

Liberty and life are going,

Hope can ne'er relieve my pain.

5

AIR LXVI.—JENNY

The Jamacia

The sex, we find,

Like men inclined

To guard against reproaches ;

And none neglect
 To pay respect 5
 To rogues who keep their coaches.

AIR LXVII.—POLLY

Tweed side

The stag, when chased all the long day
 O'er the lawn, thro' the forest and brake ;
 Now panting for breath and at bay,
 Now stemming the river or lake ;
 When the treacherous scent is all cold, 5
 And at eve he returns to his hind,
 Can her joy, can her pleasure be told ?
 Such joy and such pleasure I find.

AIR LXVIII.—POLLY

One evening as I lay

My hear. forebodes he 'd dead,
 That thought how can I bear ?
 He 's gone, for ever fled,
 My soul is all despair !
 I see him pale and cold, 5
 The noose hath stopp'd his breath,
 Just as my dream foretold ;
 Oh had that sleep been death.

AIR LXIX.—CAWWAWKEE and POLLY

Buff Coat

CAW. Why that languish !

POLLY. Oh, he 's dead ! Oh, he 's lost for ever !

CAW. Cease your anguish and forget your grief.

POLLY. Ah, never !

What air, grace and stature !

5

CAW. How false in his nature !

POLLY. To virtue my love might have won him.

CAW. How base and deceiving !

POLLY. But love is believing.

CAW. Vice, at length, as 'tis meet, hath undone
him.

10

AIR LXX.—POLLY

An Italian Ballad

Frail is ambition, how weak the foundation !

Riches have wings as inconstant as wind ;

My heart is proof against either temptation,

Virtue, without them, contentment can find.

AIR LXXI.—A DANCE

The Temple

1ST INDIAN. Justice long forbearing,

Power or riches never fearing,

Slow yet persevering,

Hunts the villain's pace.

Chorus. Justice long, etc.

2D INDIAN. What tongues then defend him?
 Or what hand will succour lend him?
 Even his friends attend him
 To foment the chase.

Chorus. Justice long, etc. 10

3D INDIAN. Virtue subduing
 Humbles in ruin
 All the proud wicked race,
 Truth never failing,
 Must be prevailing, 15
 Falsehood shall find disgrace.

Chorus. Justice long forbearing, etc.

SONGS FROM 'ACHILLES' (1733)

AIR I.—ACHILLES

A Clown in Flanders once there was

WHAT'S life? No curse is more severe
 Than bearing life with shame.
 Is this your fondness; this your care?
 O give me death with fame!

AIR II.—THETIS

Gudgeon's Song

Why thus am I held at a defiance?
 A mother, a goddess obey!
 Will men never practise compliance,
 Till marriage hath taught 'em the way?

AIR III.—ACHILLES

Did you ever hear of a gallant Sailor?

The woman always in temptation,
 Must do what Nature bids her do ;
 Our hearts feel equal palpitation,
 For we've unguarded minutes too.
 By nature greedy, 5
 When lank and needy,
 Within your fold the wolf confine ;
 Then bid the glutton
 Not think of mutton ;
 Can you persuade him not to dine? 10

AIR IV.—ACHILLES

Si vous vous moquez de nous

When a woman sullen sits,
 And wants breath to conquer reason,
 Always these affected fits
 Are in season :
 Since 'tis in her disposition, 5
 Make her be her own physician.

AIR V.—THETIS

A Minuet

Man's so touchy, a word that's injurious
 Wakes his honour; he's sudden as fire.
 Woman kindles and is no less furious,
 For her trifles, or any desire.

Man is testy
 Or sour, or resty,
 If balk'd of honours, or power or pelf:
 Woman's passions can no less molest ye,
 And all for reasons she keeps to herself.

AIR VI.—THETIS AND LYCOMEDES

To you, my dear, and to no other

THETIS. Must then, alas! the fondest mother
 Desert her child?

LYCOMEDES. Ah, why this tear?
 She'll in Theaspe find another;
 In me, paternal love and care.

AIR VII.—DIPHILUS

John went suiting unto Joan

How your patience had been tried,
 Had this haughty dame complied!
 What's a mistress and a wife?
 Joy for moments, plague for life.

AIR VIII.—LYCOMEDES

Groom's Complaint

Whene'er my looks have spoke desire,
 I sigh'd, I gazed in vain;
 No glance confess'd her secret fire;
 And eyes the heart explain.

AIR IX.—DIPHILUS

O'er Bogie

Observe the wanton kitten's play,
 Whene'er a mouse appears ;
 You there the true coquette survey
 In all her flirting airs ;
 Now pawing, 5
 Now clawing,
 Now in fond embrace,
 Till 'midst her freaks
 He from her breaks,
 Steals off and bilks the chase. 10

AIR X.—LYCOMEDES

Dutch Skipper. First Part

When woman's censorious,
 And attacks the meritorious ;
 In the scandal she shows her own malicious thought.
 If real guilt she blames,
 Then pride her heart inflames ;
 And she fancies she's better for another's fault.
 Thus seeking to disclose
 The slips of friends and foes,
 By her envy she does herself alone expose.

AIR XI.—THEASPE

Dutch Skipper. Second Part

As you, sir, are my husband, no doubt you're prone
 To turn each new face
 To a wife's disgrace ;
 And for no other cause, but that she's your own ;
 Nay, sir, 'tis an evident case. 5
 'Tis strange that all husbands should prove so blind,
 That a wife's real merits they ne'er can find,
 Though they strike all the rest of mankind.

AIR XII.—LYCOMEDES AND THEASPE

Black Joke

LYCOMEDES. Then must I bear eternal strife,
 Both night and day put in mind of a wife
 By her pouts, spleen, and passionate airs
 THEASPE. D'ye think I'll bear eternal slight,
 And not complain when I'm robb'd of
 my right? 5
 Call you this, sir, but whimsical fears?
 LYCOM. Can nought, then, still this raging storm?
 THEASPE. Yes, what you promised, if you'd per-
 form.
 LYCOM. Prythee tease me no more.
 THEASPE. I can never give o'er, 10
 Till I find you as fond and as kind as
 before.
 LYCOM. Will you ne'er ask
 A possible task?

AIR XIII.—THEASPE (*Weeping*)*Ye Shepherds and Nymphs*

O love, plead my pardon, nor plead it in vain ;
 'Twas you that was jealous, 'twas you was in pain ;
 Yet why should you speak ? To what purpose or end ?
 I must be unhappy if love can offend.

AIR XIV.—THEASPE (*Angry*)*The Goddesses*

To what a pitch is man profuse,
 And all for ostentatious pride !
 Ev'n misses are not kept for use,
 But for mere show and nought beside.
 For might a wife speak out,
 She cou'd prove beyond all doubt,
 With more than enough he was supplied.

AIR XV.—LYCOMEDES

Joan's Placket

Reputations hack'd and hew'd
 Can never be mended again ;
 Yet nothing stints the tattling prude,
 Who joys in another's pain.

Thus while she rends
 Both foes and friends, 5
 By both she's torn in twain.
 Reputations hack'd and hew'd,
 Can never be mended again.

AIR XVI.—LYCOMEDES

We've cheated the parson, etc.

Though woman's glib tongue, when her passions are
 fired,
 Eternally go, a man's ear can be tired.
 Since woman will have both her word and her way,
 I yield to your tongue ; but my reason obey.
 I obey, 5
 Nothing say,
 Since woman will have both her word and her way.

AIR XVII.—ARTEMONA

Fairy Elves

O guard your hours from care,
 Of jealousy beware ;
 For she with fancied sprites,
 Herself torments and frights.
 Thus she frets and pines and grieves, 5
 Raising fears that she believes.

AIR XVIII.—THEASPE

Moll Peatly

All hearts are a little frail
 When temptation is rightly applied.
 What can shame or fear avail
 When we soothe both ambition and pride?
 All women have power in view ; 5
 Then there 's pleasure to tempt her too.
 Such a sure attack there 's no defying,
 No denying ;
 Since complying
 Gives her another's due. 10

AIR XIX.—ARTEMONA

John Anderson, my Jo

Let jealousy no longer
 A fruitless search pursue ;
 You make his flame the stronger,
 And wake resentment too.
 This self-tormenting care give o'er ; 5
 For all you can obtain
 Is, what was only doubt before,
 To change for real pain.

ACT II

AIR XX.—DIPHILUS (*offering Achilles the ring
a second time*)

Abroad as I was walking

SUCH homage to her beauty,
What coyness can reject?

Accept, as 'tis your duty,
The tribute with respect.

With love I offer power ;
What shame can ever stain thee,

Restrain thee,

Or pain thee,

When blest with such a dower?

5

AIR XXI.—ACHILLES

Butter'd pease

Shou'd the beast of the noblest race

Act the brute of the lowest class ;

Tell me, which do you think more base,

Or the lion or the ass ?

Boast not then of thy rank or state ;

That but shows thee the meaner slave.

Take thy due then of scorn and hate,

As thou 'rt but the greater knave.

5

AIR XXII.—LYCOMEDES

Come, open the door, sweet Betty

What, must I remain in anguish ?

And did not her eyes consent ?

No sigh, not a blush, nor languish

That promised a kind event !

It must be all affectation,

5

The tongue hath her heart belied ;

That oft hath withstood temptation,

When everything else complied.

AIR XXIII.—LYCOMEDES

Altro giorno in compagnia

If my passion want explaining,

This way turn and read my eyes ;

These will tell thee, without feigning,

What in words I must disguise.

AIR XXIV.—ACHILLES

Trip to the laundry

How unhappy are the great,

Thus begirt with servile slaves !

Such with praise your reason cheat,

Flatt'ers are the meanest knaves.

They in friendship's guise accost you ;

5

False in all they say or do.

When these wretches have engross'd you,

Whose the slave, sir, they or you ?

AIR XXV.—LYCOMEDES

As I walked along Fleet Street

When the fort on no condition
 Will admit the gen'rous foe,
 Parley but delay's submission ;
 We by storm should lay it low.

AIR XXVI.—LYCOMEDES and ACHILLES

The lady's New-year's gift

LYCOMEDES. Why such affectation ?
 ACHILLES. Why this provocation ?
 LYCOM. Must I bear resistance still !
 ACH. Check your inclination.
 LYCOM. Dare you then deny me ? 5
 ACH. You too far may try me.
 LYCOM. Must I then against your will !
 ACH. Force shall never ply me.

AIR XXVII.—ACHILLES (*Holding Lycomedes down*)*Puppet-show trumpet tune*

What heart hath not courage, by force assail'd,
 To brave the most desperate fight ?
 'Tis justice and virtue that hath prevail'd ;
 Power must yield to right.

AIR XXVIII.—LYCOMEDES

Old King Cole

No more be coy,
 Give a loose to joy,
 And let love for thy pardon sue.
 A glance cou'd all my rage destroy,
 And light up my flame anew. 5
 For though a man can stand at bay
 Against a woman's will,
 And keep, amid the loudest fray,
 His resolution still :
 Yet when consenting smiles accost, 10
 The man in her arms is lost.

AIR XXIX.—THEASPE and LYCOMEDES

'Dicky's Walk' in 'Dr. Faustus'

THEASPE. What, give o'er !
 I must and will complain.
 LYCOMEDES. You plague us both in vain.
 THEASPE. You won't, then, hear a wife !
 LYCOM. I must, it seems, for life. 5
 Tease no more.
 THEASPE. Nay, sir, you know 'tis true,
 That 'tis to her I owe my due.
 No thanks to you !

AIR XXX.—LYCOMEDES

Puddings and Pies

The slips of a husband you wives
 Will never forget :
 Your tongue for the course of our lives
 Is never in debt.
 'Tis now funning, 5
 And then dunning ;
 Intent on our follies alone,
 'Tis so fully employ'd that you never can think of
 your own.

AIR XXXI.—THEASPE

My dilding, my dalding

Ah ! shou'd you ever find her,
 Complying and kinder,
 Though now you have resign'd her,
 What then must ensue !
 Your flame, though now 'tis over, 5
 Again will recover ;
 You 'll prove as fond a lover,
 As I 'm now of you.

AIR XXXII.—ACHILLES

How happy are you and I

First let him for honour roam,
 And martial fame obtain :
 Then (if he should come home)
 Perhaps I may explain.

Since then alone the hero's deeds, 5
 Can make my heart give way ;
 Till Ilium falls, and Hector bleeds,
 I must my choice delay.

AIR XXXIII.—DEIDAMIA

Fy gar rub her o'er with straw

Think what anguish tears my quiet,
 Since I suffer'd shame for thee ;
 Man at large may rove and riot,
 We are bound, but you are free.
 Are thy vows and oaths mistaken ? 5
 See the birds that wing the sky ;
 These their mates have ne'er forsaken,
 Till their young at least can fly.

AIR XXXIV.—ACHILLES and DEIDAMIA

'Beggar's Opera' : Hornpipe

ACHILLES. Know that importunity's in vain,
 DEIDAMIA. Can, then, nothing move thee ?
 ACH. Ask not, since denial gives me pain.
 DEID. Think how much I love thee.
 ACH. What's a secret in a woman's breast ? 5
 DEID. Canst thou thus upbraid me ?
 ACH. Let me leave thy heart and tongue at rest.
 DEID. Love, then, hath betray'd me.

AIR XXXV.—DEIDAMIA

My time, O ye Muses

How happy my days, and how sweet was my rest,
 Ere love with his passion my bosom distress'd !
 Now I languish with sorrow, I doubt and I fear :
 But Love hath my all when my Pyrrha is near.
 Yet why have I grieved?—ye vain passions, adieu ! 5
 I know my own heart, and I'll think thee as true ;
 And as you know my heart 'twould be folly to range ;
 For who'd be inconstant to lose by the change ?

AIR XXXVI.—ACHILLES

I am come to your house

Your dress, your conversations,
 Your airs of joy and pain,
 All these are affectations
 We never can attain.
 The sex so often varies, 5
 'Tis Nature more than Art :
 To play their whole vagaries,
 We must have woman's heart.

AIR XXXVII.—ACHILLES AND DEIDAMIA

The Clarinette

ACHILLES. Ah, why is my heart so tender !
 My honour incites me to arms :
 To love shall I fame surrender ?
 By laurels I'll merit thy charms.

DEIDAMIA. How can I bear the reflection? 5
 ACH. I balance ; and honour gives way.
 DEID. Reward my love by affection ;
 I ask thee no more than I pay.

ACT III

AIR XXXVIII.—THEASPE

No sooner had Jonathan leap'd from the boat

What are the jests that on marriage you quote?
 All ignorant bachelors censure by rote ;
 Like critics you view it with envy or spleen,
 You pry out its faults, but the good is o'erseen.

AIR XXXIX.—THEASPE

Love's a dream of mighty pleasure

Soldier, think before you marry ;
 If your wife the camp attends,
 You but a convenience carry,
 For (perhaps) a hundred friends.
 If at homé she's left in sorrow, 5
 Absence is convenient too ;
 Neighbours now and then may borrow
 What is of no use to you.

AIR XL.—AJAX

Maggie Lawther

What is all this idle chat?
 Words are out of season.
 Whether 'tis or this or that,
 The sword shall do me reason.
 Honour call'd me to the task ; 5
 No matter for explaining :
 'Tis a fresh affront to ask
 A man of honour's meaning.

AIR XLI.—PERIPHAS

Lord Frog and Lady Mouse

Oh, then it seems you want a wife !
 Shou'd I consent,
 You may repent,
 And all her daily jars and strife
 You may on me resent— 5
 Thus every day and every night,
 If things at home shou'd not go right,
 We three must live in constant fright,
 Take her at all event.

AIR XLII.—PERIPHAS AND AJAX

Richmond Ball

PERIPHAS. What means all this ranting?
 AJAX. Cease your joking ;
 'Tis provoking ;
 PER. I to my honour will ne'er be wanting.

- AJAX. Will you do me right? 5
 PER. What means all this ranting?
 AJAX. Cease your joking ;
 'Tis provoking.
 PER. I to my honour will ne'er be wanting.
 AJAX. Talk not then but fight. 10
 Give then by action
 Satisfaction.
 PER. I'm not in awe, sir.
 AJAX. Death ! will you draw, sir?
 Tittle-tattle 15
 Is a battle
 You may safer try.
 PER. Yet, first, I'd fain know why.

AIR XLIII.—PERIPHAS

In war we've nought but death to fear,
 How gracious is the sentence !
 For that is easier far to bear
 Than marriage with repentance.
 Begirt with foes, by numbers braved, 5
 I'd bless the happy crisis ;
 The man from greater danger saved,
 The lesser ones despises.

AIR XLIV.—PHILOE

Minuet of Corelli in the ninth Concerto

We may resolve to resist temptation ;
 And that's all we can do :
 For in the hour of inclination,
 What cou'd—I or you ?

AIR XLV.—ARTEMONA

Tom and Will were shepherd's twain

Think of dress in ev'ry light ;
 'Tis woman's chiefest duty ;
 Neglecting that, ourselves we slight,
 And undervalue beauty.
 That allures the lover's eye, 5
 And graces every action ;
 Besides, when not a creature's by,
 'Tis inward satisfaction.

AIR XLVI.—DIOMEDES

The bob-tail lass

In dress and love by like desires
 Is woman's heart perplex't ;
 The man and the gown she one day admires,
 She wishes to change the next.
 The more you are fickle, we're more employ'd, 5
 And love hath more customers too ;
 For men are as fickle and soon are cloy'd,
 Unless they have something new.

AIR XLVII.—ULYSSES, DIOMEDES, ACHILLES
AND AGYRTES*My dame hath a lame tame crane*

ULYSSES. Thy fate then, O Troy, is decreed.
 DIOMEDES. How I pant !

ACH. How I burn for the fight !

DIOM. Hark, glory calls,

ACH. Now great Hector shall bleed. 5

AGYR. Fame shall our deeds requite.

AIR XLVIII.—ACHILLES

Geminiani's Minuet

Beauty weeps.—Ah, why that languish ?

See, she calls and bids me stay.

How can I leave her ? my heart feels her anguish,

Hence, fame and glory. Love wins the day.

AIR XLIX.—ACHILLES

Gavotte of Corelli

Why this pain ?

Love adieu,

Break thy chain,

Fame pursue.

Ah, false heart,

Canst thou part ? 5

Oaths and vows have bound me.

Fame cries, Go ;

Love says, No.

Why d'ye thus confound me ? 10

AIR L.—ACHILLES, ULYSSES and DEIDAMIA

The Scheme

ACHILLES. O, what a conflict's in my breast !

ULYSSES. What, still in suspense ? Bid fame adieu.

- DEID. See me with shame opprest :
 I curse, yet I love thee too.
- ULYSS. Let not her sighs unman your heart. 5
- DEID. Can you then go and faith resign ?
- ACH. Should I?—how can I part ?
- DEID. Your honour is link'd with mine.

AIR LI.—PERIPHAS, AJAX, ULYSSES and DIOMEDES

The man that is drunk, etc.

- PER. Was ever a lover so happily freed ?
- AJAX. Try me no more ; and mention it never.
- ULYSS. Suppose you had found her a woman indeed.
- AJAX. Must I be teased and worried for ever ?
- DIOM. By conquest in battle we finish the strife ; 5
- PER. But marriage had kept you in quarrels for life.
- AJAX. Must you be fleering ?
 Truce with your jeering,
 Know that you wits oft pay for
 Your sneering. 10

AIR LII.—DEIDAMIA

There lived long ago in a country place

- How short was my calm ! in a moment 'tis past ;
 Fresh sorrows arise, and my day is o'ercast.
 But since 'tis decreed—let me stifle this tear.
 Be bold, yet be cautious ; my life is thy care ;
 On thine it depends ; 'tis for thee that I fear. 5

AIR LIII.—A DANCE

Minuet of Corelli

SINGLE. Nature breaks forth at the moment un-
guarded.

CHORUS. Through all disguise she herself must betray.

SINGLE. Heav'n with success hath our labours
rewarded.

CHORUS. Let 's with Achilles our genius obey.

AIR LIV.—ULYSSES

Saraband of Corelli

Thus when the cat had once all woman's graces ;
Courtship, marriage, won her embraces :
Forth leapt a mouse ; she, forgetting enjoyment,
Quits her fond spouse for her former employment.

CHORUS

Minuet of Corelli

Nature breaks forth, etc.

NOTES

NOTES

PROLOGUE TO 'THE MOHOCKS.'

Had you but seen our mighty Empror stalk, And heard, in Cloudy, honest Dicky talk, Seen Pinkethman in strutting Prig appear, etc. (p. 31) 'Little Dicky,' or 'Jubilee Dicky,' was the nickname of Henry Morris, an actor of remarkably small stature, but of great humour, who appeared in *The Wife of Bath*, *The What d'ye Call It*, and *Three Hours after Marriage*. Pinkethman was another well-known actor in low comedy. He also performed in the three pieces we have mentioned, and in *The What d'ye Call It*, according to Gay, 'did wonders.'

PROLOGUE TO 'THREE HOURS AFTER MARRIAGE.'

And fit yourselves like chaps in Monmouth Street (p. 38). The cheap clothiers of the early eighteenth century lived in Monmouth Street, St. Giles (now called Dudley Street). Compare *Trivia*, Bk. II. lines 547, 548:—

Thames-street gives cheeses; Covent-garden fruits;
Moor-fields old books; and Monmouth-street old suits.

THE FABLES, VOLUME THE FIRST.

Whence is thy learning? Hath thy toil O'er books consumed the midnight oil? ('Introduction,' p. 49, lines 15, 16). This adaptation of the familiar phrase, 'burning the midnight oil,'

may possibly have been suggested to Gay by an expression in one of Martial's epigrams. Note the following passage (*Epigrammata*, lib. viii. 3):

Scribant ista graves nimium, nimiumque severi,
Quos media miseris nocte lucerna videt.

Note also this couplet from *Trivia* (Bk. II. 557-8):

Walkers at leisure learning's flowers may spoil
Nor watch the wasting of the midnight oil.

Borri records their strength of parts, etc. (Fable x., p. 67, lines 13-18). Joseph Francis Borri, a famous chemist, quack, and heretic, was born at Milan early in the seventeenth century. He wrote books of a scientific and political character, and died in 1695.

Let those who question this report, To Pliny's ancient page resort (*Ibid.*, lines 19, 20). See Pliny's *Historia Naturalis*, lib. viii., for some remarkable stories concerning the 'learned sagacious breed' of elephants.

Now ranged within a miser's coat Contributes to his yearly groat (Fable xvi., p. 78, lines 13, 14). 'A pin a day is a groat a year' (Old Proverb).

At last in Gresham Hall was lost (*Ibid.*, p. 78, line 18). Gresham Hall was originally the house of Sir Thomas Gresham, the founder of the Royal Exchange. Before his death he converted it into a museum, and it was here that the Royal Society originated in 1645.

And all Curl's authors are in pay (Fable xxviii., p. 98, line 8). For a note upon Edmund Curl, the bookseller, see vol. i. of this edition of Gay's poems, p. 288.

Both Hockley-hole and Mary-bone The combats of my Dog have known (Fable xxxiv., p. 109, lines 27, 28). There were three bear-gardens in London when Gay wrote his first volume of *Fables*: one at Hockley-in-the-Hole (Clerkenwell), another in Marybone Fields (at the back of Soho Square), and a third at Tuttle (Tothill) Fields, Westminster. At each of these baiting was carried on.

'Petty rogues submit to fate That great ones may enjoy their state' (Fable xxxvi., p. 112, lines 39, 40). Cf. Garth's *Dispensary* (Canto i. 9, 10):

Little villains must submit to fate
That great ones may enjoy the world in state.

THE FABLES, VOLUME THE SECOND.

Sagacious Porta's skill could trace Some beast or bird in every face (Fable i., p. 140, lines 27, 28). Giambattista della Porta (1540-1615) was a distinguished Italian physicist and writer of plays. *De Humana Physiognomica*, libri iv. (Sorrente, 1586) is no doubt the book which Gay had in his mind when he wrote the couplet in question.

Give me, kind heav'n, a private station, A mind serene for contemplation (Fable ii., p. 145, lines 69, 70). Compare Addison's *Cato*, Act iv., sc. 4:

When vice prevails and impious men bear sway
The post of honour is a private station.

'THE LADIES' PETITION' (P. 213).

Sir, we the maids of Exon city, etc. (line 1). Exon is, of course, the ancient Latin name of Exeter, the cathedral city of the county of Devon.

And therefore nothing can be fitter Than frequent visits to St. Peter (lines 141, 142). Exeter Cathedral is dedicated to St. Peter.

'A DEVONSHIRE HILL' (P. 226).

But the hill of all hills the most pleasing to me Is famed Cotton, the pride of North Devon (lines 17, 18). Cotton (or Coddon) Hill is a modest eminence in the parish of Bishopstawton, some two or three miles east of Barnstaple. Its summit commands a pleasant view of the valley of the Taw on

the one side, and of the little village of Landkey on the other. Baller says that it was Gay's intention, just before his death, 'to pass some months in Devonshire, and apartments were accordingly prepared for him at a house near Landkey, in the vicinity of Barnstaple, but his friends were disappointed in their expectations of seeing him' (*Gay's Chair*, p. 22).

'A RECEIPT FOR STEWING VEAL' (P. 249).

This piece, as we have already noted in another place, was sent by Gay to Swift in the September of 1726. 'The receipt of the veal,' Gay explained in a subsequent letter, 'is of Monsieur Devaux, Mr. Pulteney's cook, and it has been approved of at one of our Twickenham entertainments.' The original receipt is preserved among the Oxford papers, and runs as follows:—'Take a knuckle of veal, cut it in three or four pieces, then put it in a stew-pan, and add to it the proper seasoning of pepper and salt, and a clove of mace or two, according to your taste. Then take salary [celery], spinage, sorrel, thyme, endive, lettuce, beet, and marigold, of each as you like, till you fill the pot. Then stop it close, that no water can possibly get into it. Then put the pot into a large kettle of boiling water, and let it stew for four hours at least,—the longer the better. Then serve it up, meat and all, skimming the fat off while you serve it.'

'NEWGATE'S GARLAND' (P. 271).

To the tune of 'The Cutpurse.' 'The Cutpurse' is the well-known song in Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*. The burden runs as follows :

Youth, youth, thou hadst better been starved by thy nurse,
Than live to be hanged for cutting a purse.

Showing how Mr. Jonathan Wild's throat was cut from ear to ear, etc. The history of Jonathan Wild, whose practices gave rise to the character of Peachum in *The Beggar's Opera*, is (says Sir Walter Scott) pretty well known. He was

a thief-taker by profession, which he united with the seemingly inconsistent character of heading a band of thieves and robbers. He received their booty, paid them for it according to his own rates, and restored it to the proprietors when it benefited his purse or reputation to do so. He had even such influence over his banditti, that he could every now and then make a sacrifice to justice of any one who he suspected had run his race, or who had murmured against his authority. In such cases Jonathan was both the person who apprehended, and whose evidence convicted his associate. But one Blake, or Blueskin, although he had been under Wild's tuition from a child, finding himself apprehended and condemned for housebreaking, and seeing his tutor in guilt the chief evidence against him, was filled at once with the feelings of indignation and despair, and, clapping his hand suddenly under Jonathan's chin, in the presence of the Court, still sitting, cut a gash in his throat with a folding-knife, which had nearly proved mortal. Jonathan Wild survived the wound, however, and being convicted under the statute of receiving money for recovering stolen goods without apprehending the thieves, he, on 24th May 1725, suffered at the gallows, for which he had bred, and to which he had conducted, so many victims.

‘MOLLY MOG’ (P. 274).

Molly Mog was first printed in *Mist's Weekly Journal* (No. 70, Aug. 27, 1726), and was prefaced by the following editorial note:—‘In our last we presented our readers with a short poem upon *Molly Mog*: as few have seen that which occasioned it, *it having never been printed*, we shall give it the public now, which will make the other better understood. We shall only observe it was writ by two or three men of wit (who have diverted the public both in prose and verse) upon the occasion of their lying at a certain inn at Ockingham [Oakingham] where the daughter of the house was remarkably pretty, and whose name was Molly Mog.’ The ‘two or three men of wit’ referred to are, of course, Gay, Pope, and Swift. But the song appears to have been the composition of Gay alone—at any

rate, Swift, in his *History of the Second Solomon* (*Works*, ed. 1824, ix. 320) speaks of 'Mr. Gay's ballad on Molly Mog.' The young lady in question was the daughter of one Mog, who, we learn from the *London Daily Post* for Oct. 21, 1736, 'died a few days since'; and who, we are further informed, 'was the father of Molly Mog on whom the famous song was made.' Molly, who lived until 1766, was in her sixty-seventh year when she died. The two stanzas of the ballad commencing respectively 'Who follows all ladies of pleasure,' and 'Those who toast all the family royal,' were the suggestion of a correspondent of the journal in which the verses first appeared.

APPENDIX TO VOL. II.—TALES

THE five Tales which follow are all reprinted from the second volume of Gay's *Poems on Several Occasions* (1720), of which they formed an integral and important part. They had not, so far as we can ascertain, any previous existence in print.

TALES

AN ANSWER TO THE SOMPNER'S PROLOGUE OF CHAUCER

In imitation of Chaucer's Style.

THE *Sompner* leudly hath his Prologue told,
And saine on the Freers his tale japing and bold ;
How that in Hell they searchen near and wide,
And ne one Freer in all thilke place espyde,
But lo ! the devil turned his erse about, 5
And twenty thousand Freers wend in and out.
By which in *Jeoffrys* rhyming it appears,
The devil's belly is the hive of Freers.

Now list'neth lordings ! forthwith ye shall hear,
What happend at a house in *Lancashire*. 10
A misere that had londs and tenement,
Who raketh from his villaines taxes and rent,
Owned a house which emptye long y-stood,
Full deeply sited in a derkning wood,
Murmring a shallow brook runneth along, 15
Mong the round stones it maken doleful song.

Now there spreaden a rumour that everich night
 The rooms ihaunted been by many a sprite,
 The miller avoucheth, and all there about,
 That they full oft' hearen the hellish rout ; 20
 Some saine they hear the jingling of chains,
 And some hath yheard the psautries straines,
 At midnight some the headless horse imeet,
 And some espien a corse in a white sheet,
 And oother things, faye, elfin and elfe, 25
 And shapes that fear createn to it selfe.

Now it so hapt, there was not ferre away,
 Of grey Freers a faire and rich Abbaye,
 Where liven a Freer ycleped *Pere Thomas*,
 Who daren alone in derke through church-yerds
 pass. 30

This Freer would lye in thilke house all night,
 In hope he might espyen a dreadful sprite.
 He taketh candle, beades, and holy watere,
 And legends eke of Saintes, and bookes of prayere.
 He entreth the room, and looketh round about, 35
 And haspen the door to haspen the goblin out.
 The candle hath he put close by the bed,
 And in low tone his *ave marye* said.
 With water now besprinkled hath the floore,
 And maken cross on key-hole of the doore. 40
 Ne was there not a mouse-hole in thilke place,
 But he y-crossed hath by God his grace ;
 He crossed hath this, and eke he crossed that,
 With *Benedicite* and God knows what.

Now he goeth to bed and lieth adown, 45
 When the clock had just stricken the twelfth soun.
 Bethinketh hem now what the cause had ibeen,
 Why many sprites by mortals have been seen.
 Hem remembreth how *Dan Plutarch* hath y-sed
 That *Cæsar's* sprite came to *Brute* his bed ; 50
 Of chains that frighten erst *Artemidore*,
 The tales of *Pline*, *Valere*, and many more.
 Hem thinketh that some murdere here been done,
 And he mought see some bloodye ghost anone,
 Or that some orphlines writings here be stor'd, 55
 Or pot of gold laine deep beneath a board :
 Or thinketh hem, if he might see no sprite,
 The Abbaye mought buy this house cheap out-
 right.

As hem thus thinketh, anone asleep he lies,
 Up starten *Sathanas* with saucer eyes. 60
 He turned the Freer upon his face downright,
 Displaying his nether cheeks ful broad and white.
 Then quoth *Dan Sathanas* as he thwacked him
 sore,
 Thou didst forget to guard thy postern-door.
 There is an hole which hath not crossed been : 65
 Farewel, from whence I came, I creepen in.

Now plain it is ytellen in my verse,
 If Devils in Hell bear Freers in their erse,
 On earth the Devil in Freers doth y-dwell ;
 Were there no Freers, the Devil mought keep in
 hell. 70

WORK FOR A COOPER

A TALE

A MAN may lead a happy life,
 Without that needful thing, a wife :
 This long have lusty Abbots known,
 Who ne'er knew spouses—of their own.

What, though your house be clean and neat, 5
 With couches, chairs, and beds complete ;
 Though you each day invite a friend,
 Though he should ev'ry dish commend,
 On Bagshot-heath your mutton fed,
 Your fowls at Brentford born and bred ; 10
 Though purest wine your cellars boast,
 Wine worthy of the fairest toast ;
 Yet there are other things requir'd :
 Ring, and let's see the maid you hir'd—
 Bless me ! those hands might hold a broom, 15
 Twirl round a mop, and wash a room :
 A bachelor his maid should keep,
 Not for that servile use to sweep,
 Let her his humour understand,
 And turn to ev'ry thing her hand. 20
 Get you a lass that's young and tight,
 Whose arms are, like her apron, white ;
 What though her shift be seldom seen ?
 Let that though coarse be always clean ;

She might each morn your tea attend, 25
 And on your wrist your ruffle mend ;
 Then if you break a roguish jest,
 Or squeeze her hand, or pat her breast,
 She cries, oh dear Sir, don't be naught !
 And blushes speak her last night's fault. 30
 To her your household cares confide,
 Let your keys jingle at her side,
 A footman's blunders tease and fret ye,
 E'en while you chide, you smile on Betty.
 Discharge him then, if he's too spruce, 35
 For Betty's for his master's use.

Will you your am'rous fancy baulk,
 For fear some prudish neighbour talk ?
 But you'll object, that you're afraid
 Of the pert freedoms of a maid ; 40
 Besides your wiser heads will say,
 That she who turns her hand this way,
 From one vice to another drawn,
 Will lodge your silver spoons in pawn.
 Has not the homely wrinkled jade 45
 More need to learn the pilf'ring trade ?
 For love all Betty's wants supplies,
 Laces her shoes, her manteau dyes,
 All her stuff suits she flings away,
 And wears thread satin every day. 50

Who then a dirty drab would hire,
 Brown as the hearth of kitchen fire ?
 When all must own, were Betty put
 To the black duties of the slut,

As well she scowers or scrubs a floor, 55
And still is good for something more.

Thus, to avoid the greater vice,
I knew a Priest, of conscience nice,
To quell his lust for neighbour's spouse,
Keep fornication in his house. 60

But you're impatient all this time,
Fret at my counsel, curse my rhyme.
Be satisfied. I'll talk no more,
For thus my tale begins—Of yore
There dwelt at Blois a Priest full fair, 65
With rolling eye and crisped hair,
His chin hung low, his brow was sleek,
Plenty lay basking on his cheek,
Whole days at cloister grates he sat,
Ogled, and talk'd of this and that 70
So feelingly; the Nuns lamented
That double bars were e'er invented.
If he the wanton wife confest
With downcast eye, and heaving breast;
He strok'd her cheek to still her fear, 75
And talk'd of sins *en Cavalier*.
Each time enjoin'd her penance mild,
And fondled on her like his child.
At ev'ry jovial gossip's feast
Père Bernard was a welcome guest; 80
Mirth suffer'd not the least restraint,
He could at will shake off the saint:
Nor frown'd he when they freely spoke,
But shook his sides, and took the joke;

Nor fail'd he to promote the jest, 85
 And shar'd the sins which they confest.

Yet that he might not always roam,
 He kept conveniences at home.
 His maid was in the bloom of beauty,
 Well-limb'd for ev'ry social duty ; 90
 He meddled with no household cares,
 To her consign'd his whole affairs ;
 She of his study kept the keys,
 For he was studious—of his ease :
 She had the power of all his locks, 95
 Could rummage ev'ry chest and box,
 Her honesty such credit gain'd,
 Not ev'n the cellar was restrain'd.

In troth it was a goodly show,
 Lined with full hogsheads all a-row ; 100
 One vessel, from the rank removed,
 Far dearer than the rest he loved.
Pour la bonne bouche 'twas set aside,
 To all but choicest friends denied.
 He now and then would send a quart, 105
 To warm some wife's retentive heart,
 Against confession's sullen hour :
 Wine has all secrets in its power.
 At common feasts it had been waste.
 Nor was it fit for layman's taste, 110
 If monk or friar were his guest,
 They drank it, for they know the best.
 Nay, he at length so fond was grown,
 He always drank it when—alone.

Who shall recount his civil labours, 115
 In pious visits to his neighbours?
 Whene'er weak husbands went astray,
 He guest their wives were in the way,
 'Twas then his charity was shown,
 He chose to see them when alone. 120

Now was he bent on cuckoldom :
 He knew friend Dennis was from home ;
 His wife (a poor neglected beauty,
 Defrauded of a husband's duty)
 Had often told him at confession, 125
 How hard she struggled 'gainst transgression.
 He now resolves, in heat of blood,
 To try how firm her virtue stood.
 He knew that wine (to love best aid)
 Has oft made bold the shamefaced maid, 130
 Taught her to romp, and take more freedoms,
 Than nymphs train'd up at Smith's or Needham's.

A mighty bottle straight he chose,
 Such as might give two Friars their dose :
 Nannette he call'd : the cellar door 135
 She straight unlocks, descends before,
 He follow'd close. But when he spies
 His fav'rite cask ; with lifted eyes
 And lifted hands aloud he cries,
 Heigh day ! my darling wine astoop ! 140
 It must, alas ! have sprung a hoop ;
 That there 's a leak is past all doubt,
 (Replied the maid)—I 'll find it out.
 She sets the candle down in haste,
 Tucks her white apron round her waist, 145

The hogsheads mouldy side ascends,
 She straddles wide, and downward bends ;
 So low she stoops to seek the flaw,
 Her coats rose high, her master saw—
 I see—he cries—(then claspt her fast) 150
 The leak through which my wine has past.

Then all in haste the maid descended,
 And in a trice the leak was mended.
 He found in Nannette all he wanted,
 So Dennis' brows remain'd unplanted. 155

Ere since this time all lusty Friars
 (Warm'd with predominant desires,
 Whene'er the flesh with spirit quarrels)
 Look on the sex as leaky barrels.
 Beware of these, ye jealous spouses, 160
 From such like coopers guard your houses ;
 For if they find not work at home,
 For jobs through all the town they roam.

THE EQUIVOCATION

A TALE

AN Abbot rich (whose taste was good
 Alike in science and in food)
 His Bishop had resolved to treat ;
 The Bishop came, the Bishop ate ;
 'Twas silence, till their stomachs fail'd ; 5
 And now at Heretics they rail'd ;

What Heresy (the Prelate said)
 Is in that Church where Priests may wed !
 Do not we take the Church for life ?
 But those divorce her for a wife, 10
 Like laymen keep her in their houses,
 And own the children of their spouses.
 Vile practices ! the Abbot cried,
 For pious use we 're set aside !
 Shall we take wives ? marriage at best 15
 Is but carnality profest.
 Now as the Bishop took his glass,
 He spied our Abbot's buxom lass
 Who cross'd the room ; he mark'd her eye
 That glow'd with love ; his pulse beat high. 20
 Fie, father, fie, (the Prelate cries)
 A maid so young ! for shame, be wise.
 These indiscretions lend a handle
 To lewd lay tongues, to give us scandal ;
 For your vows' sake, this rule I give t' ye, 25
 Let all your maids be turn'd of fifty.

The priest replied, I have not swerved,
 But your chaste precept well observed ;
 That lass full twenty-five has told,
 I've yet another who's as old ; 30
 Into one sum their ages cast ;
 So both my maids are fifty past.

The Prelate smiled, but durst not blame ;
 For why ? his Lordship did the same.

Let those who reprimand their brothers, 35
 First mend the faults they find in others.

A TRUE STORY
OF AN APPARITION

SCEPTICS (whose strength of argument makes out
 That wisdom's deep inquiries end in doubt)
 Hold this assertion positive and clear,
 That sprites are pure delusions raised by fear.
 Not that famed ghost, which in presaging sound 5
 Call'd Brutus to Philippi's fatal ground ;
 Nor can Tiberius Gracchus' gory shade
 These ever-doubting disputants persuade.
 Straight they with smiles reply ; those tales of old
 By visionary priests were made and told : 10
 Oh, might some ghost at dead of night appear,
 And make you own conviction by your fear !
 I know your sneers my easy faith accuse,
 Which with such idle legends scares the Muse :
 But think not that I tell those vulgar sprites, 15
 Which frightened boys relate on winter nights ;
 How cleanly milk-maids meet the fairy train,
 How headless horses drag the clinking chain,
 Night-roaming ghosts, by saucer eye-balls known,
 The common spectres of each country town. 20
 No ; I such fables can like you despise,
 And laugh to hear these nurse-invented lies.
 Yet has not oft the fraudulent guardian's fright
 Compell'd him to restore an orphan's right ?

And can we doubt that horrid ghosts ascend, 25
 Which on the conscious murd'rer's steps attend ?
 Hear, then, and let attested truth prevail,
 From faithful lips I learnt the dreadful tale.

Where Arden's forest spreads its limits wide,
 Whose branching paths the doubtful road divide, 30
 A trav'ler took his solitary way,
 When low beneath the hills was sunk the day.
 And now the skies with gath'ring darkness lower,
 The branches rustle with the threaten'd shower ;
 With sudden blasts the forest murmurs loud, 35
 Indented lightnings cleave the sable cloud,
 Thunder on thunder breaks, the tempest roars,
 And heav'n discharges all its wat'ry stores.
 The wand'ring traveller shelter seeks in vain,
 And shrinks and shivers with the beating rain : 40
 On his steed's neck the slacken'd bridle lay,
 Who chose with cautious step th' uncertain way ;
 And now he checks the rein, and halts to hear
 If any noise foretold a village near.
 At length from far a stream of light he sees 45
 Extend its level ray between the trees ;
 Thither he speeds, and as he nearer came
 Joyful he knew the lamp's domestic flame
 That trembled through the window ; cross the way
 Darts forth the barking cur, and stands at bay. 50

It was an ancient lonely house, that stood
 Upon the borders of the spacious wood ;
 Here towers and antique battlements arise,
 And there in heaps the moulder'd ruin lies ;

Some lord this mansion held in days of yore, 55
 To chase the wolf, and pierce the foaming boar :
 How changed, alas, from what it once had been !
 'Tis now degraded to a public inn.

Straight he dismounts, repeats his loud commands ;
 Swift at the gate the ready landlord stands ; 60
 With frequent cringe he bows, and begs excuse,
 His house was full, and ev'ry bed in use.
 What, not a garret, and no straw to spare ?
 Why, then, the kitchen-fire and elbow-chair
 Shall serve for once to nod away the night. 65
 The kitchen ever is the servant's right,
 Replies the host ; there, all the fire around,
 The Count's tired footmen snore upon the ground.

The maid, who listen'd to this whole debate,
 With pity learnt the weary stranger's fate. 70
 Be brave, she cries, you still may be our guest,
 Our haunted room was ever held the best ;
 If then your valour can the fright sustain
 Of rattling curtains, and the clinking chain,
 If your courageous tongue have power to talk, 75
 When round your bed the horrid ghost shall walk ;
 If you dare ask it why it leaves its tomb,
 I'll see your sheets well air'd, and show the room.
 Soon as the frighted maid her tale had told,
 The stranger enter'd, for his heart was bold. 80

The damsel led him through a spacious hall,
 Where ivy hung the half-demolish'd wall ;
 She frequent look'd behind, and changed her hue,
 While fancy tipt the candle's flame with blue.

And now they gain'd the winding stair's ascent, 85
 And to the lonesome room of terrors went.
 When all was ready, swift retired the maid,
 The watch-lights burn, tuckt warm in bed was laid
 The hardy stranger, and attends the sprite
 Till his accustom'd walk at dead of night. 90

At first he hears the wind with hollow roar
 Shake the loose lock, and swing the creaking door ;
 Nearer and nearer draws the dreadful sound
 Of rattling chains, that dragg'd upon the ground :
 When lo, the spectre came with horrid stride, 95
 Approach'd the bed, and drew the curtains wide !
 In human form the ghastful Phantom stood,
 Exposed his mangled bosom dyed with blood.
 Then silent pointing to his wounded breast,
 Thrice waved his hand. Beneath the frighted
 guest 100
 The bed-cords trembled, and with shudd'ring fear,
 Sweat chill'd his limbs, high rose his bristled hair ;
 Then mutt'ring hasty pray'rs, he mann'd his heart,
 And cry'd aloud ; Say, whence and who thou art.
 The stalking ghost with hollow voice replies, 105
 Three years are counted, since with mortal eyes
 I saw the sun, and vital air respired.
 Like thee benighted, and with travel tired,
 Within these walls I slept. O thirst of gain !
 See, still the planks the bloody mark retain ; 110
 Stretch'd on this very bed, from sleep I start,
 And see the steel impending o'er my heart ;
 The barb'rous hostess held the lifted knife,
 The floor ran purple with my gushing life.

My treasure now they seize, the golden spoil 115
 They bury deep beneath the grass-grown soil,
 Far in the common field. Be bold, arise,
 My steps shall lead thee to the secret prize ;
 There dig and find ; let that thy care reward :
 Call loud on justice, bid her not retard 120
 To punish murder ; lay my ghost at rest,
 So shall with peace secure thy nights be blest ;
 And when beneath these boards my bones are found,
 Decent inter them in some sacred ground.

Here ceased the ghost. The stranger springs from
 bed, 125
 And boldly follows where the Phantom led ;
 The half-worn stony stairs they now descend,
 Where passages obscure their arches bend.
 Silent they walk ; and now through groves they pass,
 Now through wet meads their steps imprint the
 grass ; 130
 At length amidst a spacious field they came :
 There stops the spectre, and ascends in flame.
 Amazed he stood, no bush or briar was found,
 To teach his morning search to find the ground ;
 What could he do ? the night was hideous dark, 135
 Fear shook his joints, and nature dropt the mark :
 With that he starting waked, and raised his head,
 But found the golden mark was left in bed.

What is the statesman's vast ambitious scheme,
 But a short vision, and a golden dream ? 140
 Power, wealth, and title elevate his hope ;
 He wakes. But for a garter finds a rope.

THE MAD-DOG

A TALE

A PRUDE, at morn and ev'ning prayer,
 Had worn her velvet cushion bare ;
 Upward she taught her eyes to roll,
 As if she watch'd her soaring soul ;
 And when devotion warm'd the crowd, 5
 None sung, or smote their breast so loud :
 Pale Penitence had mark'd her face
 With all the meagre signs of grace.
 Her mass-book was completely lin'd
 With painted saints of various kind : 10
 But when in ev'ry page she view'd
 Fine ladies who the flesh subdued ;
 As quick her beads she counted o'er,
 She cried—such wonders are no more !
 She chose not to delay confession, 15
 To bear at once a year's transgression,
 But ev'ry week set all things even,
 And balanced her accounts with heav'n.

Behold her now in humble guise,
 Upon her knees with downcast eyes 20
 Before the Priest : she thus begins,
 And, sobbing, blubbers forth her sins ;

Who could that tempting man resist?
 My virtue languish'd, as he kiss'd;
 I strove,—till I could strive no longer, 25
 How can the weak subdue the stronger?

The father ask'd her where and when?
 How many? and what sort of men?
 By what degrees her blood was heated?
 How oft the frailty was repeated? 30
 Thus have I seen a pregnant wench
 All flush'd with guilt before the bench,
 The judges (waked by wanton thought)
 Dive to the bottom of her fault,
 They leer, they simper at her shame, 35
 And make her call all things by name.

And now to sentence he proceeds,
 Prescribes how oft to tell her beads;
 Shows her what saints could do her good,
 Doubles her fasts to cool her blood. 40
 Eased of her sins, and light as air,
 Away she trips, perhaps to prayer.
 'Twas no such thing. Why then this haste?
 The clock has struck, the hour is past,
 And on the spur of inclination, 45
 She scorn'd to bilk her assignation.

Whate'er she did, next week she came,
 And piously confest the same;
 The Priest, who female frailties pity'd,
 First chid her, then her sins remitted. 50

But did she now her crime bemoan
 In penitential sheets alone?
 And was no bold, no beastly fellow
 The nightly partner of her pillow?
 No, none; for the next time in the grove 55
 A bank was conscious of her love.

Confession day was come about,
 And now again it all must out.
 She seems to wipe her twinkling eyes.
 What now, my child, the father cries. 60
 Again, says she!— with threat'ning looks,
 He thus the prostrate dame rebukes.

Madam, I grant there's something in it,
 That virtue has th' unguarded minute;
 But pray now tell me what are whores, 65
 But women of unguarded hours?
 Then you must sure have lost all shame.
 What, ev'ry day, and still the same,
 And no fault else! 'tis strange to find
 A woman to one sin confin'd! 70
 Pride is this day her darling passion,
 The next day slander is in fashion;
 Gaming succeeds; if fortune crosses,
 Then virtue's mortgaged for her losses;
 By use her fav'rite vice she loathes, 75
 And loves new follies like new clothes:
 But you, beyond all thought unchaste,
 Have all sin center'd near your waist!
 Whence is this appetite so strong?
 Say, Madam, did your mother long? 80

Or is it lux'ry and high diet
That won't let virtue sleep in quiet?
She tells him now with meekest voice,
That she had never err'd by choice,
Nor was their known a virgin chaster, 85
Till ruin'd by a sad disaster.

That she a fav'rite lap-dog had,
Which, (as she stroked and kiss'd) grew mad;
And on her lip a wound indenting,
First set her youthful blood fermenting. 90

The priest replied, with zealous fury,
You should have sought the means to cure ye.
Doctors by various ways, we find,
Treat these distempers of the mind.

Let gaudy ribbands be denied 95
To her who raves with scornful pride;
And if religion crack her notions,
Lock up her volumes of devotions;
But, if for man her rage prevail,
Bar her the sight of creatures male. 100
Or else to cure such venom'd bites,
And set the shatter'd thoughts arights;
They send you to the ocean's shore,
And plunge the patient o'er and o'er.

The dame replied, alas! in vain 105
My kindred forced me to the main;
Naked and in the face of day:
Look not, ye fishermen, this way!

What virgin had not done as I did ?
 My modest hand, by nature guided, 110
 Debarr'd at once from human eyes
 The seat where female honour lies.
 And though thrice dipt from top to toe,
 I still secured the post below,
 And guarded it with grasp so fast 115
 Not one drop through my fingers past ;
 Thus owe I to my bashful care
 That all the rage is settled there.

Weigh well the projects of mankind ;
 Then tell me, Reader, canst thou find 120
 The man from madness wholly free ?
 They all are mad—save you and me.
 Do not the statesman, fop, and wit,
 By daily follies prove they're bit ?
 And when the briny cure they tried, 125
 Some part still kept above the tide ?

Some men (when drench'd beneath the wave)
 High o'er their heads their fingers save :
 Those hands by mean extortion thrive,
 Or in the pocket lightly dive : 130
 Or more expert in pilf'ring vice,
 They burn and itch to cog the dice.

Plunge in a courtier ; straight his fears
 Direct his hands to stop his ears.

And now truth seems a grating noise, 135
He loves the sland'rer's whisp'ring voice ;
He hangs on flatt'ry with delight,
And thinks all fulsome praise is right.

All women dread a wat'ry death :
They shut their lips to hold their breath, 140
And though you duck them ne'er so long,
Not one salt drop e'er wets their tongue ;
'Tis hence they scandal have at will,
And that this member ne'er lies still.

**University of California
SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
405 Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024-1388
Return this material to the library
from which it was borrowed.**

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



A 000 150 659 1

U